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LEARN AND TEACH.

A Poem,

IN TWO PARTS,

BY

CHANDOS HOSKYNNS ABRAHALL,

AUTHOR OF 'ARCTIC ENTERPRISE', AND OTHER POEMS.

"Spirits are not finely touch'd
But to fine issues : nor Nature never lends
The smallest scruple of her excellence,
But, like a thrifty goddess, she determines
Herself the glory of a creditor,
Both thanks and use."

SHAKESPEARE.

LONDON :

J. MALLETT, 59, WARDOUR STREET, W.

1859.

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DEDICATED,

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THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE EARL OF CARLISLE, K.G.

LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND.

937712

ERRATUM.

Page 12—line 19—for *triumphal*, read *triumphant*.

LEARN AND TEACH.

PART I.

CANTO I.

"I'll so offend to make offence a skill ;
Redeeming time when men think least I will."

SHAKESPEAR.

TO LEARN AND TEACH, yet learn before you teach,
Like a due beginner,
Were a course, methinks, within the easy reach
Of mortal sinner ;
For if ye yet are men, and can discern,
Own to inquiring souls, and wish to learn
Discernment's lesson ;
The wide world holds a volume to your eye,
Wherein the blind might scan his destiny,
And feel his mission.

Now of that wide world, and its strange condition,
'T were well to consider,
Ere we be sent upon some stranger mission,
 In a world still wider :
And yet how many a thankless recollection
Springs up with but a moment's sad reflection
 On seasons flown ;
Of duties undone, Time's aptest hours neglected,
His favours spurn'd, and e'en those gifts rejected,
 That were our own.

But thou hast mark'd, in the flush time of spring,
 How Nature lavish
Spreads forth a tempting sweet in every thing,
 For thee to ravish ;
The breezes sweet that o'er her bosom roam,
 Are but foreboders,
Telling of sweeter breezes yet to come,
 And daintier odours ;
And youth will leave his duty and its dulness,
To feast abroad, and riot in such fulness.

And thus, in life's sweet prime, all-watchful beauty
 Spreads many a snare ;
Thrusting herself betwixt thee and thy duty
 In the way everywhere :
But luscious spring lives not throughout the year ;
Summer brings autumn's fruits, and winter drear
 Comes with decay ;
And this same strain might tell with warning tongue
To youth too, who will not be always young,
 That he hath his day.

But pleasure prompts, and still the reckless rover
 Of sweet to-morrow,
Untaught by to-day's truant to discover
 That the path brings sorrow,
Still presses, the Circean cup to drink
 In her rosy bowers ;
And goes to the extreme verge of ruin's brink
 For her fatal flowers :—
But some retrace their steps, and yet recover,
While the many, not so sure-footed, fall over ;

And where?—Look, trifler, ere it be too late,
 Into what thou plungest !
Look!—ask of him who hath maintain'd his state
 Of sin the longest ;
Ask, when the future o'er the past is looming,
And conscience, to the fearful fate forthcoming,
 Points like a spectre ;
Ask!—and though but a look be cast upon thee,
That look, if headlong sin hath not undone thee,
 Shall be a lecture.

But the tongue that speaks then the truth shall tell,
 And no more rebel ;
For the soul in her last fearful earthly spell
 Is an oracle ;
She knows the eternal lot shall soon be cast,
And the rebellious flesh imprison'd fast
 In the grave's cold dungeon ;
But fears, now that deception's day is past,
Into the depths of what abyss at last
 Herself is plunging.

But lo ! what hopes from the repentant come,
What looks of love,
As he goes placidly to his high home,
Afar above !

He sinn'd, but a Spirit brought a power before him ;
And with that power something more dread came o'er him
Than mere death's danger ;
And the traitor, self-convicted in his treason,
The rebel self-condemn'd, became in season
His own avenger.

Insatiate ruin clamour'd for her claim,
And thought to have him,
But true discernment to the rescue came
In time to save him ;
He look'd into the abyss, and, struck with terror,
Saw no resource,
But to abandon, and redeem his error
By a nobler course :
So a wise leader, by well-timed retreat,
Rallies his force, and gives the foe defeat.

Thus he avenged himself, if such may be
The stern resolution
To free the spirit from sin's tyranny,
And the world's pollution ;
Manly resolve ! yet who of soul so base
That doth not feel
Inly the wish to give the honour'd place
To virtuous zeal ?
The accus'd oppression shun, or, being in,
Renounce at once the bondage and the sin ?

Ill-judged that traveller's course who leaves the path,

As it were blindly,

Where peace her ever-even progress hath,

Calmly and kindly,

To tempt the dire morass, whose tangled brake

He must unravel,

Ere he might disengage his steps and take

More certain travel :

Yet, pilgrim, such, experience still would warn ye

To be the error of life's chequer'd journey ;

Or voyage, for life is like a course at sea

That man doth steer,

And he who best escapes the wreck will be

The best foreseer ;

Arming him early for those storms and troubles

That yet must come,

Ere, like a hopeful mariner, he doubles

His last cape home :

For oft the tumult of the time grows wilder,

As the haven opens on his sight the milder.

But he who in a life of lawless revels

Sails with the tide,

Yielding, erroneous, to those siren-evils

That ever misguide ;

Meets at each turn some tempter that hath power

To win him over,

And in each fresh associate of the hour

A ready approver :

But let him change his course, still will they haunt him,

Yet how ?—to obstruct, to harass, and to taunt him.

Now shall he have to encounter looks estrang'd,
 That once could proffer
 The approving smile of sin ; the flatterer chang'd
 Into the scoffer ;
 And foes in unexpected forms, and trials
 That still tempt back, and ceaseless self-denials
 Await his bearing ;
 But great shall be the glory of his pride,
 If all their efforts fail to set aside
 His noble daring.

But the pang he shall feel is the fix'd remorse
 That shall haunt his reflection,
 Till peace that feeling erase, and force
 From recollection ;
 While one of joys many 't will be to think
 That all might claim
 The hope from the same blessed source to drink,
 Save for that shame,
 The child misbegotten of craven pride,
 Who fears to assert what the world will deride :

But the force of conscious truth will grow the stronger,
 When the trial is near ;
 Why then should conscious sin transgress the longer,
 Through this base fear ?
 Yet would she still sustain a state so piteous,
 Sin on, and rather hold with the unrighteous,
 And hug the dishonour,
 The hereafter risk, perpetuate the ill,—
 Than turn, and greatly brave those taunts that will
 Be lavish'd upon her.

But such is sweet, when evil is subdued
By the true subduer ;
And one of many joys his solitude
Shall bring the truer
To him now lonely-left,—the best and surest
Of blessings, and that brings, perchance, the purest
Of many joys,—
Shall be the thought that he might spread this peace,
And help to make that evil influence cease
Which still destroys :

For ceaseless now shall be the work of love
That his life's day hence engages,
Ere he be call'd to the High Court above,
To take his wages.
Oh ! let him waste not then, in vain remorse
Upon the errors of a hated course,
Those golden hours,
The bounteous grant of an All-gracious Heaven,
Who, after sins unnumber'd, yet forgiven,
His blessing showers.

The chastening hand shall temper his distress
With a pure pleasure,
And throw in his deepest cup of bitterness
A priceless treasure :
But who can say, save such as have repented,
How much the loss of many sins lamented
Supports the sinner ;
Who, losing there where he would be a loser,
Goes as a gainer to his High Disposer,—
A glorious winner.

For his past life, though he may not ignore it,
 He may amend it ;
And 't were wiser to repent it and deplore it,
 Than in sin to end it ;
Enough for him if One he hath offended,
Looking from Heaven on that life amended,
 Proffers his pardon ;
How fruitless then in self-recrimination
To waste those hours so precious for salvation,
 And lose the guerdon.

A wise tongue saith, “ things without remedy
 Should be without regard : ”
So should they, save that ye might profit by
 The ills they award.
Prove, idler, then, life's work was but deferr'd,
Mid scenes o'er which, like summer's air-borne bird,
 Ye so wantonly hover'd ;
And show that those unvalued tracts of time,
Like rich possessions mortgaged in thy prime,
 Can yet be recover'd.

This still is thine, till death annul the bargain,
 And close the contract ;
Wake then, and while life's schedule leaves a margin,
 Renew the compact !
If little space be left, mourn not for such,
But seek Him who can make that little much,
 A lowly suitor ;
Compute time's worth by his lamented waste,
And from the giddy round of follies past
 Rescue the future.

If thou art call'd into the vineyard late,
 The more thy reason
To serve Him well who pays thee at the rate
 Of the day's full season :
For look ! thy Lord shall prove a gracious Master
To thee, a truant of old, and a time-waster,
 And reckless servant ;
So thou, at length, even at the latest hour,
Bring to thy task a purpose and a power
 Faithful and fervent.

The tiller tempers the most stubborn soil
 By cultivation,
And he who hires requites that tiller's toil
 With a due ration ;
But the full harvest in its future beauty
Shall tell how well that tiller did his duty
 While he was serving ;
And Heaven who lends shall still be found rewarding
The use of the talent that he lends, according
 To its deserving.

If thou hast grudg'd thy culture, take more heed
 Hence, and amend thee ;
And fit thy stubborn spirit for the seed
 That Heaven doth send thee.
If thou hast held the gold lent thee for use,
 Bethink thee how
Thou'l meet the lender ; shall thy sloth's excuse
 Avail thee now ?—
Let then thy gold return still-added gold,
And thy harvest to thy Lord an hundred-fold.

But be not of great truth the wayside hearer
Who hears but a moment ;
Or the base apostate, or the recreant fearer
Of the evil world's comment :
Nor rashly suffer the wild thorn to grow,
Rank and deceitful,
And o'er top the aspiring plant that shoots below,
And bring it unfruitful :
Least let thy spirit be that stony waste
Where thou no time-abiding tillage hast :

Thou hast—all have—some worldlych arge of worth,
To thy guidance given ;
And these tenets shall so shape thy path on earth,
That it end in Heaven :
Yet some there be who love their aberration,
And, with fond folly,
Banish each better thought's solicitation
From the breast wholly ;
But watch their lives, and what is there to scan
Save one unceasing war with God and man ?

Such men as these are untaught, or taught badly,
Never self-taught ;
And thus they pass their days in visions sadly,
Or vainly sought :
By conscience school'd, the unerring voice within,
They might have noted,
That a life spent amidst unseemly sin
Is a life besotted ;
That the path of vice is not a path of flowers,
While virtue blooms in never-fading bowers.—

What then remains, but that with humble hope,
And patient spirit,
Ye tread where Truth unfolds her boundless scope,
Yet take no merit :
And as your own good deeds might sway the lot
Others are born in,
What should your word of counsel be, or what,
But this, your warning ?—
“ For thy day here, be it a mild or rude one,
Act thy part well, and let it be a good one :

“ Be in thy course collected, not elated,
Patient, and let time prove ;
So shall the ills, to which that course is fated,
Be a source of love :
If thou would’st bear the cross, it is a blessing
Within thy reach ;
And will show that thou art feeling and confessing
What thou dost teach,—
The penance of a passing night which, borne,
Takes thee at length to an eternal morn.”

CANTO II.

“ Life’s but a walking shadow ; a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more.”

SHAKESPEAR.

THUS then it is : fulfil thy part, but view
Thy station truly ;
That what it there befits thee best to do,
May be done duly ;
Yet droop not, though thou failest to fulfil,
There is an unseen tongue shall prompt thee still,
And save thy falling ;
Thou hast an ample stage, take then the part
Whereto thou’rt call’d, and throw thy cordial heart
Into thy calling.

Look ! in this loud world’s ever-varied stir
Of toil and strife,
Man, the chief mover, hath his theatre,
And acts his life ;
Its scenes exhibit, as in some passing play,
Or joy or sorrow ;
For on that stage where gladness reigns to-day,
Grief mourns to-morrow :
Yet reckless vice holds here triumphal revel,
And virtue cannot counteract the evil.

But the action here takes not its stated course
Through scenes ideal ;
It represents itself, and hath a force
Vivid and real.

Here are no plots in petty miniature,
Where merit seems to pine, or strife to incur
An unfehl rage ;
But the ill endured, and still-accomplish'd crime,
And all the stern realities of time,
On their true stage.

The drama this, whose world-wide spectacle
Of life and death
Shows to the sun the teeming things that dwell
His skies beneath ;
Holding to open Heaven's examination
The face of life in faithful presentation,
And feature true ;
The course of vice and virtue to the grave :
E'en the great drama that great Nature gave,
And Shakespear drew.

Here is the goal of untamed power's ambition,
And the field of fame ;
The god of the one,—insatiate acquisition,
Of the other,—a name ;
Such are fond idols, sought by all, yet found
By the few only ;
And wise is he who takes a modest round,
Remote and lonely ;
For though he hath to play his part of sorrow,
Content to-day will bring content to-morrow.

For look ! ye must not mete man's happiness
 By that which meets the eye ;
Want hath her woes, yet wealth is in distress
 From superfluity :
And Innocence, albeit a homeless rover,
Is happier far than bloated Guilt above her,
 Whom cares molest ;
While Merit spurn'd, with all her taunts upon her,
And fore'd to yield her place to foul Dishonour,
 Is still most blest.

'T is here one universal Drama brings
 Scene upon scene,
Made up of mix'd and all-incongruous things,
 But mostly unclean :
Rough-visag'd Truth, smiling Hypocrisy,
Contemptuous Pomp, and shrinking Poverty,
 Jostling each other ;
Rich Fraud, who with Display revels in sin,
Yet hath religious black to robe it in,
 One with another ;

The Antic still, whose ever-changeful ways
 With wild variety
Perplex, and feed fond observation's gaze
 E'en to satiety.
Here all in shape grotesque comes flaunting Folly
 With aged Worth,
There, like a winter-cloud, grim Melancholy
 With smiling Mirth ;
And contraries still clash in fresh collision,
Like some enchantment, or some frenzied vision.—

Time flies, the moralist saith, nor saith amiss
That his loss is disaster,
While the great grievance of the idler is
That he flies no faster.
That lean and hungry carle who withers yonder,
Is known a miser,
Who lays up wealth for wilder fools to squander,
Wilder yet wiser ;
For wiser he who gives the world his treasure,
Than he who hoards for mere possession's pleasure.

But sadder chances, and more moving scenes,
Discordant blend
With the strange vagaries Inquiry gleans,
Still without end.
Joy laughs while Anguish mourns, and as Hope lies sleeping
In her golden dreams,
Pale Disappointment her cold watch is keeping
O'er blighted schemes ;
For Joy and Hope exult at their exemption
From ills those mourners feel to be past redemption.

Here while young Mirth his clamorous revel keeps
With wild life o'erjoy'd,
There the late sharer of his gladness sleeps,
Untimely destroy'd :
But joy and grief in the same breezes swell,
Where the cheerful nuptial peal and sad death-knell
Unite their jingle ;
While the mourner's pageant, and the festive dance,
Death's cavalcade, and Love's gay dalliance,
Rudely commingle.

Here Woe enacts some piteous rite, and Sin
Some midnight mystery, perchance, within
The sound of laughter :
And as Innocence sports, the Tempter steals between
Her and her bliss, nor leaves the sunny scene,
Till he hath reft her
Of the promise of life's present peace serene,
And marr'd the hereafter :
So once he came, in deadly-beauteous guise,
To strike man's hopes, and blast his paradise.—

And War and Peace, the slayer, and the slain,
The wild beast and his prey,
Are here ; sweet Peace,—a queen of transient reign,
The creature of a day,—
Builds here her homes, and sows her solitudes,
And sings her joys ;
When sudden, fury-featured Strife intrudes,
And War destroys ;
And earth,—a scene of wickedness proclaim'd,—
Brings forth some monster-crime, too fearful to be named ;

“ A deed without a name,”—save with the damn'd !—
And hark !—wild cries
Of mothers, through affrighted Britain's land,
In nameless agonies,
Ask her to answer with avenging tear
That piercing call,
And cast aside her festal plume, and wear
The funeral-pall
Of deepest die,—for in her distant tents
There is a slaughter of her innocents !

There Sin sits 'midst the followers of his own
 All-evil creed,
To uphold the hideous carnival, and crown
 The dreadful deed ;
Till direness, like some new-born Gorgon, is
Evoked from hell's yet-unexplored abyss
 By this fell Power,
Who, in his last foul offspring, doth beget
Something of savageness uncompass'd yet
 In time's saddest hour :—

How were it other ?—There the darkest faith,—
 That faith of hell
Which He, the Light, is on His wondrous path
 Yet, to dispel,—
Encaves the Hindoo in his ignorance,
Making his savage soul the toy of chance,
 And superstition ;
To a self-seeking priest, who mocks the Heaven
With a grotesque idolatry, up-given
 In mute submission.—

Only less foul comes from the traitorous hand
 Of that arch-spoiler,
Who, with a toiling host at his command,
 Enslaves the toiler :
For He who gave the life, by His decree
Enjoin'd the eternal law of liberty ;
 And as the breath
Is to the life of man, so to the nation
Free freedom is alone the respiration
 That saves from death :

Her overthrow sets not the tyrant free ;
Nor can ye call
That free which is but a wild liberty
Bred from her fall.

True Freedom is the child of Peace and Love,
That ranges the empyrean spheres above,
But never came,
Save in a momentary form, on earth,
To die, and like some prodigy of birth,
Leave but a name :

Yet with that name, perchance, a light serenc,—
As the star, passing by,
Throws a far luminous beauty where hath been
His bright divinity ;—
Something that lives through night's dark influence there,
Scorning alike the invader's steel, and snare
Of tyranny ;
A pulse that beats beneath the oppressor's chain,
Telling of life yet left, to live again,
And to be free.

Great hope, whose power can something yet control
Oppression's treason !
A greater comes to cheer the patient soul,
In Heaven's due season :—
But she, thy vaunted-free, vain-glorious dreamer,
Begets, however much thou might'st esteem her,
Her own detraction ;
Lo ! where she sways, the freest from restraint,
She is but a tyrant with a deeper taint,
And wilder action ;

Even in her land of loudest protestation,
 But a confusion ;
Or worse,—the tyrant's snare ; an ostentation,
 And an illusion :
And fair Columbia's fame, the wildly-free,
Is stain'd with the dead-black spot of slavery ;
 She who professes
To rend the inthralling manacle, and be
The fountain of that world-wide liberty
 Which only blesses.

But baser power is suffer'd still to trample
 On freedom prostrate,
And patriots chain'd who teach by stern example
 How to remonstrate :
Yet Justice wakens while she hears proclaimed
The edict foul, and sees the look unshamed
 Of cold Oppression ;
The iron link is at the captive's heart,
But retribution comes that shall impart
 A fearful lesson.

And from her sea-fastness as she looks on,
 In her old isle,
Indignant Britain doth duly con
 These deeds the while ;
And a compeer in greatness hath cannon near,
 Whose thunders greet her,
And his armaments leave their harbours there,
 In glory to meet her ;
And they sail in friendly rivalry forth,
To save, lest tyrants devour the earth :

For wearied at length of their fruitless strife,
These giants shake hands ;
As best befits their noble life,
And border-lands ;
And friendship from bitterest feuds doth come,
Sometimes, the mildest,
As the graft hath the fairest fruitage from
A stock the wildest :
And long may each sway, as a true peace-maker,
To bind the bond fast, and chastize the breaker.

All hail to thee, France !—old enemies,
Once reconciled,
Should all the more stringently bind their ties,
As their strife was wild.
The alliance fair was a nation's choice,
And we bid thee all hail with a nation's voice,
And a nation's sympathy ;
May our blood, as one, in future flow ;—
And ever let, 'Death to freedom's foe,'
Be the battle-cry !

And still may a temperate greatness o'erwhelm
Thy own commotion ;
And thy fair reconciliation with that free realm,
Beside thee in ocean,
Bear the sweet fruits of peace ; so thy toil from afar,
Rising betimes like the morning-star
In modest glory,
Might dress thy vineyards, by hoof or car
Ne'er more to be trampled of deadening war,
Gloomy and gory !

Great states that have no cause for quarrels,
Should be good neighbours ;
Then be faithful, France ! and lay up your laurels,
And sheath your sabres !
And be true, to thy own chosen chief !
And ne'er let it be thy future grief,
Or fatal sin,
To raise the rebel-victor's shout,
And reckless, exchange the war without
For war within.

That isle thou look'st on, so cold and stormy,
Hath yet a breast,
That feels for a noble rival warmly,
And would have him blest ;
And when, by stern experience school'd,
His tumults cease,
Oh, how doth she joy to see him ruled
Like herself, by peace !
For her civil contention is not the sword's,
But the war of her sons is a war of words.

Yet from their united wisdoms rise
Disunions frequent ;
And feuds with their train of enmities,
And grudgings sequent ;
And where, in the councils of a nation,
Reason should sway, and Deliberation
Ever abide,
Invective foul, and fierce Debate,
Recrimination, and envious Hate,
Parade their pride ;

And Faction, who loves round the great and wise
 To raise her storm,
Masking in stern Truth's awful guise
 Her evil form,
Brings all her hateful influence here ;—
 So clouds conspire
To obstruct Heaven's light, and obscure the sphere
 With tempests dire ;
But soon their thunder-shafts are spent,
And the sun supreme in the firmament.

And thus the true Patriot holds his power,
 Calm and unshaken,
Albeit in tumult's darkest hour
 Fouly forsaken ;
And though the storms rise in their wrath,
To obstruct his day, and cross his path,
 In vain they rise ;
For he sits, like the sun enthroned on high,
In still-untarnish'd majesty,
 And keeps the skies :

Great still to act, and to decide
 For instant action,
He holds his course of fearless pride,
 In spite of Faction ;
He heeds not censure, seeks not fame,
His country's glory is his aim,
 Her honour his ;
'T is on no tortuous course of shame
That country rests her patriot's claim,
 But 't is on this,—

He hath served her long, and served her well,
 Yet this is treason ;
The Athenian did the like, and fell,
 For the like reason :—
Even He, the Greatest, might not stand,—
 A God on earth !
But there were evil tongues at hand
 To impugn His worth ;
Reject a blessed-brought exemption,
And strive to undo a world's redemption.—

The isle, fair France, thy foe of old,
 Now shares thy glory ;
So may your strife henceforth be told
 In brighter story !
She thinks with thee to be great and free,
And so long as ye are, so long shall ye be
 The tyrant's terrors ;
But her good is not unmix'd with ill,
Yet, oh ! that she might prosper still,
 And amend her errors ;

And teach to her sons of every estate,
 Both rich and rude,
The homely truth, that to be great
 Is but to be good ;
That honour alone gives the fair repute,
 And that knowledge
Is a tree more valued for its fruit,
 Than its foliage,
And becomes, if it bears not virtue's blessing,
The wider curse as the more 't is increasing.

And let her heed not how high might be
The sinner's station,
For in guilt accomplish'd ye but see
 Guilt's aggravation :
The poor man deprived, and untutor'd within,
Is sorely tried when in paths of sin
 He is tempted to rove ;
But the rich man abounds in what he needs,
And this should prompt to blessed deeds
 Of mercy and love.—

Yet deeds accrue'd are oftentimes perpetrated
 Where blessings should be given,
As though on earth another hell were fated
 To war with Heaven :
For an evil god hath here his time and season,
 And his full sway,
Whose touch can stifle truth, and stir up treason,
 Can save, or slay ;
Can warp stern ermined justice to his will ;
Can buy the oath, and make the healer kill.

At his behest such horrors are enacted
 Before Heaven's eye,
As make the good, who see such things transacted,
 Look up on high
With trembling prayer to the Omnipotent,
His judgments to suspend, and to relent,
 And yet have pity ;
And if within these gulfs of sin profound
But ten poor scatter'd righteous might be found,—
 To spare the city.

His deeds of death it were a gloom to tell,
For horrors all,
That thought might picture of an unknown hell,
Come at his call ;
Many,—albeit the fiend he serves doth lend to
His living influence more,
Setting him up for every power to bend to,
All sects to adore ;
Like the idol of that evil king of old,
Who carv'd his god, and worship'd him in gold.

At his unholy shrine, souls deem'd aloof
From earth's temptation,
Solemn and pure, and saintly, and sin-proof,
Offer oblation ;
And the world sees this, and decries the sight,
Like a huge universal hypocrite,
At itself preaching ;
For this Prince of darkness hath a dazzling light,
That bewilders e'en the teachers of the right,
And confounds in the teaching.

But for this world that yields this power transmitted,
As 't were its own,
Oh ! what a blessing, were the boon permitted
For good alone :—
No longer then should Honour's voice be slighted,
Nor faithful Industry die unrequited,
Nor merit pale
Sink unregarded, nor meek Patience pine,—
But Justice hold with even hand divine
Her awful scale.

That 't is not so, the Toil whose sinews feed thee,
 The best can tell,
If the selfish lust of lucre yet mislead thee,
 And no pity impel.—
Then wanton still, as wanton joys entice,
Proud Wealth ! and stint with a strange avarice
 Toil's scanty measure ;
Spread thy vain pageant forth on every breeze,
There is a world will worship as it sees
 Such gorgeous treasure !

But he who mines the gold that buys thy state,
 And feeds thy fatness,
Who weaves thy robe, and makes that splendour great,
 That makes thy greatness ;
Who for thy thankless pomp laborious, bears
 The heat of the day,
Himself in extreme misery's vileness wears
 His poor life away ;—
Vileness untouch'd by thee, it is unclean ;
Unnoted,—'t is behind thy glittering scene !

Turn, and survey him in his secret world
 With equal eye ;
Look ! where he lies, after his labour hurl'd
 To the loathsome sty !
There shalt thou see, in foulness all forlorn,
Daughter and sire, the old and newly born,
 On the same pallet spread ;
Mother, and son, and sister, piteous thrown,
Perchance, by one who hath his spirit flown,—
 Lying with the dead !

But pity from this worse than persecution
 Turns away, tearful,
Thinking such wrong must bring a retribution,
 Fatal and fearful :—

It is the strength of Toil that yields thy riches,
Stint but that strength and thou must stint thy wishes,
 Reason proclaims it ;
But that he have some shelter at thy hands,
Honour and human brotherhood demands,
 And justice claims it :

Deal then to Toil with unrestricting hand
 Freely his hire,
And it will make his rugged breast expand
 With kindlier fire :
And teach, and temper with mild admonition,
And 't will go far to make his rude condition
 Content and sober ;
But if the poor man is the rich man's wealth,
To rob his strength is but a foolish stealth,
 That turns on the robber.

Each lacketh each, Plenty the hand that feeds,
 And fills his abundance ;
While toiling Want looks for his nature's needs
 To Wealth's redundancy :
And would they be but mutually-conducive,
No disaffection thence, nor strife intrusive,
 Might mar their union ;
But ye should see the trustful smile of greeting,
"Twixt each, and Toil with liberal Afluence meeting,
 In calm communion.—

Such acts God's holiest oracles proclaim
With voice divine ;
And such the all-suffering Redeemer came,
Himself to enjoin ;
And with His sinless lips spake forth, and cried
Rebuke at selfish wealth's presumptuous pride,
The curse of the earth ;
Warning mankind in love and peace to abide,
Renounce their grovelling instincts, and provide
For a higher birth.

But 't is in vain, though God on earth descending,
Vouchsafed his favour ;
And from the fellest act of her offending
Suffer'd to save her ;
Rebellious Sin, like a devouring host,
Makes her invading march, and riots most
Beneath His banner ;
And, girt with pious craft's false panoply,
Rages her worst, nor deems His distant eye
Might reach and scan her.

Thus the dark Drama swells with outrage foul,
Of every enormity ;
And Vice sins on, content in Virtue's cowl
To hide her deformity,
Thinking that outward semblance shall avail her,
Though undeceiving conscience inly fail her,
At every grade ;
And, Heaven's express injunctions all forgot,
Belies herself, and seems what she is not,
In this hideous masquerade :

But to complicate confusion more, and more
 Bewilder the wildness,
Fanatic Strife stalks with rude step before
 Christ's spirit of mildness ;
And sweet Religion, who would save the crowd,
 See a wild antic
Usurp her throne, storming the Heavens aloud,
 With gesture frantic ;
Herself betray'd, her chosen sons disbanded,
And undone the blessed bonds of the peace that Christ
 commanded :
Turning, she meets a foe, to her deep grief,
 At every corner ;
In guise of cold self-virtuous Unbelief,
 Or the open scorner ;
Who, lost within a world of sin and night,
Wildly descants on the unaided light
 Of human goodness ;
And the all-sufficient force of Nature's might,
To shun the wrong, and to pursue the right,
 In this riot of rudeness.—

Thus the scene comes and passes, and again,
 In cycle strange,
Comes round, with the same trials in its train,
 And the same change ;
For all is change unceasing, things the same
 In revolution ;
Rotation sure,—there should be no such name
 As dissolution ;
Death is but reconstruction,—a new goal,
And starting-place for the enfranchis'd soul.

But this change, though Philosophy sedately
 Await its coming,
Takes to a world whose shores affect him greatly
 With their dark looming :—
This is the change of Death, the eternal mover,
The strict arrester, and most stern reprobate,
 And certain slayer ;
Who takes the last that in Life's drama lives,
Shifts the last scene, and his last exit gives
 To the poor player.

CANTO III.

“ Madman, thou arrest : I say, there is no darkness but ignorance ; in which thou art more puzzled than the Egyptians in their fog.”

SHAKESPEAR.

Now such a world of strange disparity
 And stranger change,
Offers to Contemplation's musing eye
 A boundless range ;
For here a chaos rude of mingling schemes,
Born of Wealth's lust, or wild Ambition's dreams,
 Meets the beholder ;
Which, though his youth's quick gaiety disown them,
He scans with care, and duly learns to con them,
 As he grows older.

But having watch'd the pageant, as it passes,
With eye serene ;
And ponder'd well its various forms and phases,
To the last scene ;—
How the like cause is for the like effect
Oft unavailing ;
The source of achievement here, the source direct
There of the failing ;—
Each thwarting each, and seeking strange relief
E'en from the infliction of his fellow's grief :

This man, with all the power of worldly wealth,
Or worldly science,
Looking to further selfish greed or stealth,
For its appliance ;
That, with the daily needs of common nature
Almost denied him,
Sharing his pittance with his fellow-creature
Pining beside him :—
I say, well scanning these tumultuous scenes,
What might he deem that all this drama means ?

Perchance, borne by a moment's wavering reason
To that conclusion,
He deems it a dark day, where every season
Comes in confusion ;
Or magic self-wrought by self-acting power,
For unknown purpose, and allotted hour,
Alike unknown ;—
But such is wild :—these wonder-worlds around
Have one great law, whose acts the power expound
Of love alone.

Those orbs majestic, seeming disunited,
Are what they seem ;
But their remote disunion is requited
In the great scheme :
Tending unerringly to one bright source,
They yield their light, and hold their heavenly course,
And keep their station ;
And as each orb hath its due path assign'd,
Even so its habitant of every kind,
His destination.

But the sphere of human action hath a rule,
And law of order,
Whereof each man keeps in his breast a school,
And faithful warder :
The orb rolls on, secure in its own orbit,
And the ruin would involve, that did disturb it,
An unknown danger ;
So, in this lesser-moving sphere of man,
Whoso diverges from the eternal plan,
Wakens the Avenger.

All human woe springs from a will perverse,
In human action ;
The law a blessing, but a certain curse
That law's infraction.
If men would be but as they should be, friends,
With liberal love,
Even as the impartial daylight that descends
On all from above ;
Tumult should cease, these odds would be all even,
And virtue yet on earth find a congenial Heaven.—

Teach then this truth,—thou who dust inly feel
The unselfish ambition,
To exalt thy brother-creature, and to heal
His hurt condition :—
Yet vain,—though all the blessings of thy heart
Go with thy preaching ;
And thou dost practise what thou would'st impart,—
Vain all thy teaching :
For what can Virtue, albeit Heaven-exampled,—
On earth betray'd, derided, and down-trampled ?

Yet she shrinks not, but takes her ills upon her
As her best guerdon ;
It is her cross ; and lo ! a great Forerunner
Bore the like burden ;
And He is with her in the scene, and shares
Her persecution ;
And promises for all the ills she bears
Sure retribution.

The strife may come, the shaft her bosom enter,
But it cannot wound the trust where the hopes of that
bosom centre.

Virtue shrinks not ; the spirit of innocence,
For ever free,
Dwells spotless there, albeit traduced, perchance,
By the world's obloquy,
Perchance by Power, and forcedly mix'd with evil,
To be debased to sin's unhallow'd level ;
Yet 't is in vain ;
For she shall flow apart, like the fine gold,
And reassert her beauty as of old,
And be pure again.

Foulest aspersions rise, yet, like a saint,
She knows none ;
She may not lose her lustre, takes no taint,
And shows none ;
But as that gem which is the purest,
Repels the breath quickest and surest,
And spurns the touch ;
Before the breath of foul Detraction
That meets her in the world's wild action,
Virtue is such.

Almighty-arm'd, she fears not her assailants,
Though hosts assail her ;
Graces all-stainless are the true repellants
That never fail her ;
She can confront and look away their wrath,
And sweep them from her aspect and her path,
As the sun in the sky
Those clouds, conspiring in his heavenly way,
That rise like traitors, to dispute his sway,
And cross his majesty.

For the world's rude wounds she hath, in peace of soul,
A sovereign balm ;
The storm without may be beyond control,
But within 't is calm :
Tempestuous winds that sweep the watery scene
With wild commotion,
Cannot yet break the secret peace serene
In the depths of ocean :—
So Virtue rests, in awe of One alone,
Whose watchful eye is ever on His own.—

But Vice too plays his worldly part ;
And though triumphs await the actor's art,
There looks on the act, and notes the man,
 One great Spectator ;
The Greatest,—He is no other than
 That man's Creator :
And whatever his course of fraud or force,
 Grim Death, 't is certain,
Will intervene at the closing scene,
 And draw the curtain.

But now for the actor of the wrong
 Comes a fearful audit ;
The act is left, but no hireling tongue
 Is left to applaud it :
He hath play'd his part, and served his time,
And now on a mightier stage sublime
 Is summon'd to enter ;
Of the reckless course of folly and crime,
That he took in the world's wild pantomime,
 Too late a repenter.

He had a life, but of that life's mission
 Never bethought him ;
Though the conscious sins of a fall'n condition
 Ever besought him :
He walk'd not in the road of right
 That his own dark instincts taught him ;
And e'en shut his eyes to the beautiful light
 That God himself had brought him :—
Strange sin ! to err where Reason points the road,
And spurn the guidance of a present God !—

Thus intersected, and by paths divided
 Of good and ill,
Earth hath one path, which who pursues is guided
 Divinely still ;
The other is all-curs'd ; and whoso takes it,
Whether he still pursues it, or forsakes it,
 Sooner or later,
Grows, at the dictates of his own remorse,
Or the chastening influence of some grander force,
 Its deadliest hater.

Upon that path are flowers of many blooms,
 But oh ! beware !
Perditions, lurking in their venomous wombs,
 Are the fruits they bear :
It is the bloom of death, whose beauteous blossom
Offers its odorous hues before the bosom,
 But as a snare ;
A meretricious charm, and an illusion,
Thrown there to tempt to ruin and confusion,
 And dark despair.

There Sin before the unwary footstep lays
 Her fatal fangs,
Link'd with remorse that gnaws the soul, and slays
 With lingering pangs ;
And yet not slays ; so it might seem the kinder,
If the sad soul, with this sad fate assign'd her,
 Should for ever die ;
But Death holds no dominion here, she hath
A life, or in the good or evil path,
 Immortally.

Having freewill, she chose the way of guilt,
All-strangely tempted ;
Yet, through some precious blood that hath been spilt,
May be exempted,
Mercy mysterious ! from this wilful sin,
And the fearful penalty it brings within,
Freely and fully ;
But what are the conditions of exemption ?
That she feel all the force of her redemption,
Deeply and truly.

For he who takes this faith must own its source
As the all-hallow'd,
And by that faith as strictly shape his course,
As the form is follow'd ;
Being that true and steadfast sin-forsaker,
Who, as the unworthiest suppliant, of his Maker
Implores salvation ;
While Charity, in all her varied beauty,
Prompts him to do for genuine love his duty,
Without ostentation.—

Learn then thy part !—this, if thou duly connest,
As thy skill best can,
Hath no offence ; it is but to be honest
To God and man.
Give thy whole love to Heaven ; this, if thou givest
Truly, it cannot but be that thou livest
In peace on earth ;
But the son's strife keeps the Sire unreconciled,
And thou art but the individual child
Of one great birth.

Learn then, and teach the duty due to Heaven !
And hence shall come,
As surely as the blessed morn and even,
A worldly sum
Of debts incurr'd, and duties due to neighbours ;
And look ! the more are urg'd these blessed labours
Of mutual love,
The nearer still the approach to the all-ample,
And wondrous goodness of that great example
Sent from above.

Learn well, and it shall teach thee to teach well,
That that thou learnest
May to the taught the like sweet comfort tell
With that thou earnest :
Learn, and impart to all within thy reach ;
But practise still the precepts thou dost teach,
Else shall thy learning
A mockery prove, distasteful and ungrateful
To the unenlighten'd ear, and ever hateful
To the discerning :

And do not thou, as 't was the schoolman's use,
In night of yore,
To the dark cloister, and the cell recluse,
Confine thy lore ;
Grow with the growing time ; and be not sunk
In that self-sensual and cold-blooded monk,
Who, in these bright days,
Would, like the tyrant in his ancient hold,
Restrict to his own exclusive state and cold
Heaven's blessed rays :—

And let not those specious zealots charm thee,
Who prate so proudly
Their pious fears, and would alarm thee
By prating so loudly,—
That, in tracing the maze of earthly science,
You set Heaven's guidance at defiance,
And go from God :
Irreverend hand ! that would shut the book
By its great Author lent thee, to read, and look
At his works abroad.

And the witless tongue heed not, that saith
It shall still be the rule,
That the school under varied forms of faith
Is the sceptic's school :
While this wrangle of knowledge secular
Unbless'd by divine, as Instruction's bar,
Is but the jargon
Of men who are building on hollow ground,
And striving to make by an idle sound
A graceless bargain.

All temporal knowledge, to be true,
Must be based on divine ;
For in man's mutual duties due,
They both combine.—
Teach then, within thy generation,
To each, the duties of that station
Wherein he is thrown ;
Teach him to deal as he'd receive ;
To be true,—and the issue humbly leave
To Heaven alone :

The one Faith given, feel no fear
 What form it hath ;
So that he walk, with a conscience clear,
 In the Christian's path :
For of modes of faith if thou ask the best,
 The answer is brief ;
The doing right is the truest test
 Of the right belief ;
And he who least assumes, as a believer,
Of God's rich grace, perchance, the full receiver.—

Learn then, and teach ! open wide the door
 Of learning's treasure,
That others may of the precious store
 Partake, at pleasure ;
And give no heed to that proud pretender,
 Who fain would tell you,
To engross the light, and from its splendour
 Exclude your fellow :
God, the great Giver of all bounties, gave
Knowledge to all but for the will to have.

And set not thy reason, through any persuasion,
 So far at defiance,
As to fear that more knowledge might give occasion
 For more self-reliance :
Mean fear ! lest the mind, with its power of expanse,
Once escaped from debasing ignorance,
 As from a fetter,
Should learn, as its own true self-adviser,
If rightly taught, that to be wiser
 Is but to be better.

The fruit of the fair tree is interdicted
 By Heaven no longer,
And the reason it should be on earth unrestricted
 Is thus the stronger :
Then lend no ear to the selfish folly,
For perversion foul and most unholy
 Falsely persuading ;
The light by which life must be conducted,
Should be, like Heaven's daylight, unobstructed,
 And all-pervading.

The sun with a liberal bounty rears,
 As he scatters his beams abroad,
The fruits of the earth's teeming womb, and cheers,
 Like a descending god :
Even so in the mind's wild universe,
Light is a blessing, its lack a curse ;
 And 't is most strange,
That while God gave that light for extension unceasing,
A churl should be found who would narrow the blessing,
 And limit its range.

God gave thee the soil, but its culture is thine ;
 He gave thee the plant,
And 't is thine to see that it shall not pine
 For that culture's want ;
Look forth, proud man, o'er yon green domain !
The hind that hath rear'd that grass and grain
 Unto such beauty,
Asks of thee, as a fellow-creature,
To deal thus with his human nature,
 And do thy duty !

For the hind thou hast hired to till thy fields,
Is himself untill'd,
And nought but a noxious barrenness yields,
While thy fields are fill'd :
And dispensest thou thus the gracious kindness
That couch'd the darkness of that blindness
By thyself so abhor'd ?
But if thou art learned or rich, be assured,
Of that skill and wealth thou art but the steward
To a higher Lord.

More generous tillage shall bring thy soil
A better bearer,
And thy hind shall grow more honest and loyal,
As thou art fairer ;
The noxious weed for awhile may smother
The righteous plant in the one or the other ;
So 't will behove thee,
Watchful, to check the licentious growth
In the till'd and the tiller, one and both,—
And this shall prove thee.

Each plant of Nature's prolific womb,
When brought to birth,
Looks to the light for its growth to come,
Aspiring from earth ;
And the cheering sun and the cherishing shower,
Alternate, encourage life's crescent power
With their sweet spring-weather ;
But the bounties that raise the crop, and feed
The good corn, raise and rear the weed,
And they grow together :

But the tiller will ply the tutor's toil
With early care ;
And cleanse and correct the stubborn soil
Ere the seed is there ;
When, casting it on a temper'd loam,
Though the tare may encroach, and the darnel come,
In rank confusion,
Yet he works in his field from dawn till dark,
Leaving to Heaven to bring his work
To a good conclusion.—

Thus in man's wayward nature the good implanted
Comes up with the bad ;
Then toil should not slacken, nor tillage be scanted,
But heed must be had ;
For oft God's works are cross'd by the devil ;
And the good can scarcely grow for the evil,
And the poison-plant,
Where the ground is left waste in the growing hour,
Insinuates most its deadly power,
And supplies the want.

Then, teacher, clear, like a good task-master,
The weeds away ;
And the kindly crops shall spring the faster,
As the wild decay ;
Not merely clip, but eradicate,
And be early afield, and labour late,
Like the faithful hind ;
Ere to their summer-strength they grow,
And the seeds of a new rank offspring sow,
Through the wanton wind.

And if all thy efforts might not avail
From the foul companion
To save the pure, and thy counsels fail
To mar their union ;—
Relax not yet, but renew thy pains,
A righteous deed itself sustains,
If the doer persist ;
Urge the good work so well begun,
A conscious pride shall help thee on,
And Heaven assist.

The principle of truth instill'd
Shall yet take root,
Though a vicious growth in a soil self-will'd
Its power dispute ;—
But the weed, through the force whereby it was born,
Will wither when pluck'd from the soil, and forlorn
On the surface strown ;
Even so the licentious errors of youth,
Shall yield to the rays of sober truth,
When the man is grown.—

But feed with care, as you train the mind
With careful culture ;
For the hunger it hath a judgment blind ;
And like the vulture,
That mind hath an ever-insatiate gorge,
Where the quarry devour'd doth but enlarge
The lust for more :
Then teach it so to discriminate,
That such as befits its unsettled state,
Shall be its store.

And as 't is ranging for its prey,
 Let your efforts tend
To place instruction in its way,
 As a means to an end ;
Point to Truth's, as the road it should be going ;
Let Truth be its aim, and be ever showing
 Her priceless worth ;
Or your teaching all will be but sowing
A curse, to be for ever growing,
 As that mind grows forth.

If the sons of the age seek erudition,
 Open the book ;
And do not discourage so fair an ambition
 With exclusion's cold look ;
For the mind is an ever-restless rover,
And like the dial's, its movements discover
 Life's loss or gain ;
And if you forbid him the onward track,
You do but drive the creature back
 To the woods again :

To keep him benighted will teach him to ravage,
 And steal, and slay ;
For thou art thyself but a tutor'd savage,
 Brought into day ;
But would'st thou to that fell state return,
And the lesson of progress thyself unlearn,
 Or keep shut in thy breast ?
Let then this truth on thy conscience strike,
That the worst of thy kind would with thee alike
 Be reclaim'd and blest.

And the vain mean fear lest in teaching the lesson
 You instil the evil,
 Might alike restrain from preaching God's blessing,
 For fear of the devil ;
 'T is that blessing that saves the tempted throng ;
 In teaching the right, you unteach the wrong,
 And expose the ill ;
 And a secular knowledge, pure and sound,
 Must be divine, and shall thus confound
 The Tempter's skill :

When he plies his craft, the lesson instructed
 Shall come between,
 And a host remain for one deducted ;
 And though 't is seen,
 That Guilt works fearful wonders there,
 Where Skill steps in with his subtle snare,
 Yet rest assured,
 That man, with the shield of sound instruction,
 Shall meet its sinuous introduction
 With soul secured.

Then scatter the seeds of instructive lore
 With liberal hand,
 And spread with tempering counsels o'er,
 Throughout the land :
 Ye raise your palaces to abide,
 When succeeding dwellers there have died,
 Through long generations ;
 But purer shall be that good man's glory,
 Who goes down as the founder of knowledge in story,
 And the raiser of nations :

Of granite-stone ye build the tower,
 That ; with front sublime,
It may stand the assailing tempest's power,
 And the stroke of time ;
But the structure of virtue ye might raise
On the basis of truth, in life's early days,
 Shall outlive the stone ;
And display a still-unfretted beauty,
When that stone hath long become time's booty,
 And its glories are gone.

Raise then this structure with a fearless fervour,
 Ever increasing ;
So shalt thou live thy country's best deserver,
 And die with her blessing.—
Tell man, that with his clay he doth inherit
A night that throws its clouds across his spirit,
 And shrouds his mind ;
Teach him himself, and open up before him
This ignorant dark that holds its influence o'er him,
 And keeps him blind.

But as the unwarn'd approach of sudden light
To the blind-born, might be a gift too bright
 For mortal bearing ;
And as the sweetest music-sounds ye hear
Would strike but tumult to the opening ear
 Of the new-hearing ;
And as the sick are surest led to health,
And strengthen'd best by gradual steps of stealth ;
So should'st thou grant the treasures of this wealth
 With care and fearing.

Impart thy lore ; let in this light of Heaven ;
 But be all-heedful :
Give all, but let no more at first be given,
 Than at first is needful :
Deal gently with thy humbler human-kind ;
Open the road, but lead the untutor'd mind
 By easy stages ;
Load not its strength, and strain not to distressing,
'T will find in its own toil its own best blessing,
 And sweetest wages.

The wild horse sweeps the desert, yet when taken,
 Yields to the trainer ;
And the wildest spirit is not so all-forsaken,
 But care might rein her ;
Let due restriction be thy earliest lesson,
Curb first the steed, but let a sage discretion
 Govern thy touch ;
Restrain the step that would be too far-reaching,
Rein in the unruly will, and be not teaching,
 At once, too much ;

For as the slave, long-fetter'd to the soil,
 And crush'd and quiet,
Looking on sudden freedom as a spoil,
 Will rise and riot ;—
So the mind sudden-waked from ignorance,
Wherein it hath slept, as in a state of trance,
 And known no other,
Looks forth with all those thoughts of lawless forage,
Which nature's wiser instincts might discourage,
 Yet cannot smother.—

LEARN THEN, AND TEACH ! nor pass that precept by,
 Ever the sternest,—

How best to live so as the best to die ;—
 Teach, and be earnest !

This is the sum of wisdom ; a rich treasure
Hath he who metes his conduct by this measure,
 And so guides his going,
That still some sweet spring up his path to bless,
In every step throughout life's wilderness
 For ever growing.

But above all, a few brief truths instill,
 In life's young day,
Ere, if thou canst, the thought of action ill
 Hath sway ;
Point to the time, and give this truth to know,
 As its moments fly,—
Virtue alone is happiness below,
 Vice, misery ;
Contentment, the true wealth in every station ;
Unbounded hope, a mere infatuation.

LEARN AND TEACH.

PART II.

CANTO I.

“ Consideration like an angel came,
And whipp'd the offending Adam out of him.”

SHAKESPEAR.

THUS far, by simple and unweeting hand,
 Lowly endued,
Traced, as they were along the wayside scann'd,
 In outline rude,
These scenes of man, in the error of his ways,
Are offer'd to the idler's passing gaze,
 While like a spectre,
A strange Truth comes with solemn step profound,
Meetest to infix the moral, and expound,
 And fill the picture.—

It chanc'd,—as it might ofttimes chance again
To man's condition,—
Like a reckless crew sent o'er a stormy main,
On a far mission,
A band of resolute and restless spirits,
Much on a par as to their social merits,
And well-allied,
Pursuing each his favourite course of sin,
Went down the flood they had been plung'd within,
As went the tide :

That flood was Life's wild ocean, through whose force
None sail securely,
Save such as keep them from the sinful course
To themselves purely ;
Steering apart, and with the wilder stream
Never more mingling than might well beseem
To stay its troubles ;
And then to their own peaceful way of life
Straightway returning from the scene of strife,
And its vain bubbles.

A land loom'd oft, yet unto them its shore
Was unassuring ;
Nor reck'd they on what rock they fell before
They reach'd their mooring ;
Some headland doubled, or some shoal escaped,
Bred them a merriment, and still they shaped
Their course, all-careless ;
If the storm rose, portentous of disaster,
It did but urge them on that course the faster,
And made them fearless.

Sin sat before these outlaws (for they were
Outlaws of reason,)
In every siren-shape, and set her snare
In every season ;
With what success, it little boots to tell ;
Suffice that one amidst them knew full well,
And rued full sore ;
See in the sequel through what wondrous motive
He sought, by a new course divinely-votive,
The promised shore.

It may be by some tender tie of kindred
Waked to compunction ;
Or that at length obstructive conscience hinder'd
Sin's further function ;
Belike, some mother's forceful voice reproved,
Or that some sister, whom the truant loved,
Charm'd him from error ;
Howbeit, when brought to ruin's very verge,
He paused, and turn'd him from the threatening surge
With timely terror ;

And shaped his course anew ; how,—ye shall see ;
Yet 't was divined,
Nought save the marvel of some mystery
Might wake that mind,
Which sought in sin's vain promise a release
From haunting thought ; and thus the way of peace
Had been forsaken,
Evil companionship too early cherish'd,
And the path wherein so many souls have perish'd
Too rashly taken.

But whence this error, wherein all so nearly
 He had been lost ?
 Whence, but from love too true, and that too early
 And surely cross'd :
 Now in this lot he did not stand alone ;
 It is the grief of many to bemoan
 Passion's frustration :
 But early love, cross'd by untimely death,
 Leaves to the stricken spirit nought beneath,
 Save desolation.

A fatal fascination had invaded
 His boyhood's prime ;
 A form too early-lovely, for she faded
 Before her time ;
 He grew with her, and watch'd, and while beside her,
 All-little deem'd he evil might betide her ;—
 She was his pride,
 The idol of his soul, his faith, his all ;
 And when she found him fast within her thrall,—
 She died.

His spirit, sudden thus o'ercast with gloom,
 When young and guileless,
 Against the instincts of a higher doom,
 Plung'd into vileness ;
 Wedded, for vain relief, with Infamy,
 Yet loved her not with that unholy glee,
 The world's foul fashion ;
 But, blessed chance ! he had a sire, who felt
 And fear'd for him, and oft in secret knelt
 For God's compassion ;

Perchance, his prayer was heard ; a faithful prayer,
 Sent up to Heaven,
Brings back return with tenfold fulness, where
 The heart is given ;
Yet oft through unseen path that fulness falls,
 Where least expected,
And by Him who listens when the good man calls
 Is best effected :
That sire was aged, had grown old in trial,
And took not Heaven's delay for Heaven's denial.

But the son, a truant, little reck'd of blessing,
 Or to be bless'd ;
Yet oft, 't was said, a throe of thought distressing
 Escap'd his breast ;
Such was the momentary pang that told
Of something there which still maintain'd its hold,
 As the defender ;
Striving through long and patient force to rout
The investing foe, and bear the battle out,
 And not surrender :

For one he was, and he was one of many
 That in error abide,
Whose leaning seem'd to be, if 't were on any,
 On virtue's side ;
He felt foes, such as rebel-passions are,
 Within engaging,
And with the good and ever-evil war
 For ever waging ;
And, feeling this, summon'd his thoughts within,
To hold a council on this course of sin.

The youth, launch'd wild on changeful Life's existence,
As he roved on,
Deser'd, he thought, another in the distance,
Where change was none ;
And,—as the shore at twilight-time is brought
To storm-tost sailor,—
Its shadows loom'd upon his lonely thought,
Darker or paler,
As the tone or temper of his mind might be,
Or as the soul might, or the vision, see.

Now came the case no conscience might oppose,
Or fail to settle,
Save those unapprehensive most, or those
Of basest metal,—
Whether 't were best to hold a course of life
With Heaven and Nature at eternal strife,
And open treason,
Or take the assurance of that peaceful transit,
Which had Heaven's promised guidance to advance it,
And the voice of reason.

The question once debated, 't was decided
By final judgment,
Vice should no longer in a breast misguided
Maintain a lodgment.
At this, fierce fury seized the basiled foe,
And the death-struggle straight ensued ;—when lo !
The aged sire
To the rescue came ; the day was lost and won ;
Heaven heard that father's prayer, and gave that son
Time to retire.

All present danger past, in penitence
The youth fell low ;
And shame wrote in his heart a contrite sense,
And on his brow ;
The watchful sire, a sage in nature's laws,
Noting the effect, and conscious of the cause,
Forthwith endeavour'd
That one he so lov'd, e'en in degradation,
Might from the sinner's foul association
Be henceforth sever'd.

But here there came no marvel to unravel,
Though such may come ;
He told of realms where he, in early travel,
Was wont to roam ;
And drew such scenes before the enraptur'd child,
And with these tales of wonder so beguil'd
His listening youth ;
That henceforth, aught of wildest-strange tradition
Had fall'n upon his waken'd superstition,
As all of truth.

The boy held in his breast that gift of fear,
Such as is found
To bring the haunted bard and uttering seer
Alike spell-bound ;
An awe portentous, which he sought to fly,
By running into wild reality,
As it were goading
His spirit, till, like a startled steed, it fled
To the sure fulfilment of his direst dread,
And worst foreboding.

Now on these moody fears the sire reflected
With thought distressing,
Yet deem'd they might become, if well directed,
His son's best blessing ;
Inly advised of this, in quiet session,—
Whenas his wondrous words had gain'd possession
Of the youth's quick breast,—
The old man spread forth, as occasion offer'd,
Freely his lore, a various banquet proffer'd
To a welcome guest ;

And thus began :—but first he laid before
His youthful hearer,—
(To enhance the value of one realm the more,
And make it dearer,
Even as the foil doth heighten more the jewel,)
Strange exiles whereof he, through fortunes cruel,
Was erst a sharer ;
So, that fair realm, where he would have him rove,
The youth, by contrast, come the more to love,
And view the fairer.

'T is thus in Nature's world the wilds that grow
Set off her beauty ;
Thus sinuous ways of sin more tempting show
The paths of duty ;
Sweet summer thus more gorgeous doth appear,
When, newly usher'd in by winter drear,
She spreads her treasures ;—
Haply, so deeming, this fond sire began,
In phrase such as an anxious father can,
And suasive measures.

CANTO II.

“ My soul, turn from them ; turn we to survey,
Where rougher climes a nobler race display :
Where the bleak Swiss their stormy mansion tread,
And force a churlish soil for scanty bread.”

GOLDSMITH.

“ FROM Nature’s hand free-fashion’d, and intended
For freedom’s clime,
By her great self from tyrant-step defended,
And tyrant-crime,
There is a Land that looks upon the world,
As with a Heaven-assured defiance, hurl’d
Mutely below ;
All-coldly there around the tiller’s toil
She piles her snows, yet from the sacred soil
They shut the foe.

“ For wild exploit that land yields not to any,
By many virtues, as by mountains many,
On high uplifted ;
Her womanhood is fair, her manhood free,
Robust, and, as the mountaineer should be,
Valiant and gifted ;
Still prompt with various viand to regale
The pilgrim-stranger,
For he is of the desert and the dale,
Alike, the ranger :

“ There oft,—to bring the chamois to the bay,—
With rifle girded,
Well-breath’d, and with a body for the fray,
Belted and sworded ;
Bloodhound to trail, and telescope to say
Where he is herded ;
Accoutred well, through many a wildering day,
And peril nightly,
He wends, and wiles with song the hours away,
For his heart sits lightly.

“ But many a terror round that toiler’s path,
And o’er his soul,
Must come, methinks, ere he attained hath
His midnight goal ;
Yet thoughts like these are transient things,
That tell him of what sires he springs,
And of what nation ;
And, as the rival Alps arise,
He cuts the clouds, and climbs the skies,
In emulation.—

“ Thus in the uphill of man’s pilgrimage,
Perils prevail ;
And where he most hath need of counsels sage,
There most assail ;
Lying in wait, ere in his onward course
He reach the summit,
Thief-like, to stop him on the road, or worse,
Decoy him from it ;
But some there be, too true to turn away,
From virtue’s chosen path too great to stray.

“ Yet who from virtue’s sacred cause decoy’d
 By the world’s guile,—
His high-placed hopes obscured, but not destroyed,—
 Yet stray awhile ;
Stray from her ranks, disloyal, yet return
To her bright standard,—he it is doth earn
 Wreaths more unfading
Than all by warrior-chieftain ever worn,
Wreaths that take lustre from foul censure’s scorn,
 And sin’s upbraiding.

“ But he who in the fearful field of honour
 Strikes for a name,
Goes through a world of death ere he hath won her,
 And fix’d his fame ;
But once that summit gain’d, all the more nearly
The abyss lay yawning, ever the more dearly
 He rates his glory ;
And sweet ’t is to be sung in his land’s song,
And greatly known her wondering sons among,
 And told in story.

“ Ever with such hazards, and for such vain guerdon,
 The up-climber copes ;
Yet what would struggling life be but a burden,
 Without its hopes :
The ambitious step death’s dizzy path despises,
If on that path a sweet grows that disguises
 His fatal form ;
Thus doth the hunter of the mountain-forage
Oppose to gulfs of rock his boisterous courage,
 In night and storm :

“ And as he homeward takes his headlong journey,
 Where torrents hoarse
Roar down some gorge, whose threatening shadows sternly
 Fall on his course ;
He eyes the impending height, whose peaks arise
 But to elate him,
For he knows, when he brings home his mountain-prize,
 Whose smiles await him ;
Few are his fears ; his native cliffs abide
Steadfast, and stand eternal at his side :

“ But lo !—in the faithless world of man,
 At that dark hour,
When the eye, bewilder'd, fails to scan
 Misfortune's power,
The friend who, while thy star was shining,
 Came flattering by
The first, will be, with that star declining,
 The first to fly ;
And he, who partook of thy fortune past,
Shall leave thee alone at the first rude blast.

“ In thy success, such is the friendly hand
 The world doth offer ;
Hand ever prompt to serve at Wealth's command,
 And share his coffer :
But, Son ! let not such specious love deceive thee ;
Be true unto thyself, though the world leave thee,
 And self-reliant ;
If thou hast soul, aspire, but be persistent,
For in thy course are many foes existent,
 And each a giant :

“ Let but thy aim be pure, thy purpose true,
And feel assurance,
A fortitude shall grow, to bring thee through,—
A sure endurance :—
If stern obstructions rise in thick confusion,
Learn from themselves a sturdy resolution,
And never yield ;
If ill comes, as a foe thou canst not fly,
Thou holdest yet, if thou hast purity,
A steadfast shield.

“ The mountaineer surveys his mountain-ranges
With conquering eye ;
His aim is clear, his purpose never changes,
The storms pass by :
His life is like his own wild atmosphere,
Fearful yet hopeful, yet his direst fear
Is a day undeeded ;
By him the ice-cataract, and thunder-shock,
The snow perennial, and the eternal rock,
Alike unheeded.

“ His is a clime where in each feature, Nature,
Remote and rude,
Remains as she was framed, like her Creator,
In solitude ;—
There, granite-hewn, she stands, an awful form,
That ever, since the first, hath braved the storm,
Now, as of old ;
Patient alike, beneath the suns of summer,
And with the wintry tempest thrown upon her,—
Patient, and cold :

“ Her aspect is as she uprose at birth,
From chaos thrown ;
Struck from the very frame-work of the earth,
And left, alone ;
Alone and motionless ; and though around her
The flash and thunder-bolt fall to confound her ;
All-vain their visits are ;
The mark she bears is her own lineament,
The furrows in her hoary forehead rent,
Are not their scar :

“ Thousands of years, winter’s on winter’s snow
Hath fall’n there, yet that clime,
With this cold burden on her aged brow,
Stands forth sublime ;
Seathless before the dire north-blast that hastens
Stern winter’s ear, and on her bosom fastens
With icy fang ;
And though the glacier bind a chain, that seldom
Remits its hold, she shrinks not from the thralldom,
And feels no pang :

“ But she stands forth, as though to ask on high
Of Him who made her,
From her fair sons, and her free liberty,
To stay the invader ;
And His great covenant, in words of wonder,
Is heard upon her hills, where cliff and thunder
In conflict meet ;
And He, as her own safeguard, ever bound her,
And the tide of tyranny that sweeps around her,
Breaks at her feet.

“ On her untrodden tops there sits a God,
Whose fearful ire
Comes forth in words that may be heard abroad,
And looks of fire :
There, on the thunder-tempest driven,
He rolls His chariot through the Heaven,
Or, in mists below,
Broods o'er the glacier's city of ice,
Or sweeps down o'er the precipice,
In a cloud of snow :

“ He is known in the mountain-steep, where storms
Usher His coming ;
He is known in the mountain-deep, in the fearful forms
Of an ocean foaming ;
His face, through the starry firmament wide,
In unnumber'd mysteries descried,
Shines everywhere ;
'T is His breath that curls up the water-tides,
And through the waste of the desert guides
The wandering air.

“ But the storm to these giant-mountains sent
Through the element,
Seems, for the hour of its action, lent
For their merriment :
The ocean delights in his foaming flow ;
And the peaks of the Alp exulting know
The time of their carnival ;
For those Titans, though they stir not, throw
Their boisterous welcomes to and fro,
And answer each other's call : (1)

“ This tempest-intercourse is the glee
 Of their mountain-meeting,
And the flashing cloud’s artillery,
 Their manner of greeting :
And the ocean was told to foam and flow,
 And toss its tumults, and to grow
 With the growing wind ;
’T was for such purpose spread below,
And the tide that it gives and takes doth show
 Its path assign’d.

“ But man, though he hath a God within him,
 Rebel as he may,
Goes with each vain thing that would win him
 From his true way ;
And scorning to listen to Nature’s tale,
 And take his road through her temperate vale,
 Blessing, and blest ;
Trusts himself to sin’s stormy element,
 Where all, who e’er went before him, went,
 Never to rest.—

“ God to the mountain gave a steadfast feature,
 To the storm a force ;
But his Maker hath mark’d out for reason’s creature
 A peaceful course ;
And the Alp sustains the tumult of the skies,
 As with a conscious greatness, that defies
 The tempest’s strife ;
Yields yet this lesson—if thou would’st but hear,—
That Peace hath yet a less aspiring sphere,
 And lowlier life ;

“ For terrible, amid the conflict loud
That frequent rages,
The huge snow-bolt, hurl’d through the midway cloud,
In the strife engages :—
And while in cold embrace, the peaks beneath,
The Glacier sits, in many a shape of death
Grimly array’d,
In stern and stoic-like philosophy,
Till the elemental tumult passes by,
And the strife is stay’d ;

“ Yet sometimes, by the tempest’s fury shaken
To wildest wrath,
Or by the icy pressure torn, and taken
A downward path,—
As though to make confusion more confounding,
Along the rattling crags afar resounding,
With furious sally,
Like a beleaguer’d foe in force collected,
He comes, with a visitation least expected,
On the sleeping valley :—

“ But his distant kin, in those fields of frost
That in far Spitzbergen’s mists lie lost,
Have a wilder destination ;
The glacier there, in the mountain-gap,
Appals not,
For in living Nature’s flowery lap
He falls not,
But in a limitless waste of snow,
That hath no sound, above or below,
Save the sea’s agitation :

“ And there,—as polar pilots tell
In words of terror,—
They fall, and sweep o'er an ocean fell,
In endless error ;

That the sternest, it may be, that e'er steer'd forth,
To unlock the ice-door, and unseal the north,
Is aghast and grim,
As he sees the icy rampart rent,
And sent down to sail on his element,
And battle with him :

“ And fierce and furious is that war
Of Death with Life ;
And the wound he deals there is not like the scar
Of human strife ;
For he coldly strikes, and the weapon he wields
Is not like the weapon of battle-fields,
Where patriots fight ;
The warrior falls there on a field of ice,
And his wound is the frost's cold cicatrice,
Or famine's bite ;

“ Or Disease, who works with her hideous fingers
The wasting tetter,
While, hugg'd by the floating foe, he lingers
In his icy fetter :—
But the Glacier that sleeps in the Alpine gorge,
Knows not his strength, nor cares to urge
His downward flight ;
But he lies in his granite bed profound,
And keeps, like the cliffs wherewith he is bound,
A passive might :—

“ Yet he bears his ponderous lot with an endurance,
 Steadfast and stern,
That might to suffering man give some assurance,
 If he would learn :—
The clouds o'er Virtue's rugged path that rise,
Like the visitations of the angry skies,
 Threaten in vain ;
She knows the storm that comes, comes but to prove her,
That 't is Heaven's great design not to remove her,
 But to sustain :

“ And ever, when the world's reproaches rude
 Rise to defame her,
She swerves not, but with meek and patient mood
 Outbears the clamour ;
And like a saint on earth in Heaven's protection,—
Scorn of that pious-proud, whose self-perfection
 No prayer might move,—
She walks serene, in the cold world apart,
Dispensing unseen bounties from her heart,
 And breathing love :

“ Thus where the Alp her fellest waste expands,
 Portentous, o'er thee,
Or, like some sudden apparition, stands,
 Fearful, before thee ;
Bethink thee, there the tempering breezes play,
And fountains, lost along their wandering way,
 Sport through the vale ;
There from her icy lip and breast of snow,
Sweet fragrance comes, and streams of mercy flow,
 That never fail ;

“ There Nature, of her wintry wrath repenting,
For her stricken child,
Comes, like a gracious goddess, all-relenting,
And reconciled ;
Summer returns, and Winter, as he rages,
Grimly retires,
Or, chang’d in aspect, lingers and assuages
Her fiercer fires.—
Pause then, fond youth ! amend what is amiss ;
Subdue thy passions, and confirm thy bliss :

“ If thoughts unruly overbear thy spring,
Reflect a moment,
And let the summer of thy manhood bring
More serious comment.
Passions, ’t is sure thou hast ;—all nature hath ;
Earthquakes convulse the world, the tempest’s wrath
Maddens the ocean ;
Volcanoes vent their fires ; while oft between,
Thunders break forth, and whirlwinds sweep the scene,
And aid the commotion :

“ Yet in them dwells,—to still them, or to move them,—
A ruling spirit ;
Even such,—to guide thy passions and reprove them,—
Dost thou inherit ;
For He who gave, gave not this sacred trust,
To incite their fury, and inflame their lust,
But to control ;
That so, those passions, at a temperate pace,
Might take thee calmly through thy earthly race
To the great goal.—

“ Think on these words, o'er mountains when, afar,
Thy way thou takest ;
And let their memory be the guiding star
Thou ne'er forsakest ;
Retain their counsels as thy truest riches ;
And (for, methinks, to speed thy father's wishes
Is yet thy love,)
Assure thee well, if e'er a father's prayer
Went for a child to Heaven,—my cry is there,
For thee, above !—”

For future lay 't is left to say
How those wishes were rewarded,
And how well the scope of the son's quick hope
With the father's prayer accorded ;
'T is enough to tell that the breaking morning
Waked Hope to fulfil her dream,
And that son, in the spell of that father's warning,
Set forth, (as ye might deem,)
Led by a fond invisible hand,
To trace the glorious mountain-land.

CANTO III.

“ And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything.”

SHAKESPEAR.

ALL-HOLY dawn ! fair hour, when Nature’s face,
No longer hidden,

Looks up, unscarr’d by time’s or ruin’s trace,
Fresh as in Eden ;

Toil’s early friend, restorer of the earth,
True still-recurring promise, glorious birth,
Child of the day !

Meek saint return’d, and with new beauty given,
Like a descended messenger from Heaven,
To assert thy sway !

Sweet com’st thou to give hope unto the sailor,
And sweet and well,

To loose the captive from the steely jailor,
And stony cell :

Grief looks for thee, who mourns o’er love forsaken,
And Conscience, by his spectral terrors taken,

Implores thy light ;

Guilt seeks, self-scared, thy golden-opening door,
And darkness-loving Treason loves thee more
Than his own night.

Sweet art thou, when through the wild mountain-air
 Thy blushes come,
 Showing to the bewilder'd traveller where
 He may safely roam ;
 Sweet to the soldier who hath lain in blood,
 The fell night on,
 Thy succour, in his helpless solitude,
 When the battle is done :—
 Darkness and all her fiends shrink back before thee ;
 And they who shun thee most the most adore thee !

Sweet is thy sure and timely visitation,
 Where mortals are,
 Loosing them from dark night's incarceration ;—
 But sweeter far
 Break'st thou, oh Light Divine ! within the breast
 Of the repentant who, with faults confess'd,
 Welcomes thy visit !
 Who, offering up a heart too long estrang'd,
 Buys priceless bliss for that poor heart exchang'd,
 And cheaply buys it.—

Such light, perchance, with that fair morning came
 To that truant youth ;
 To guide him from a course of sin and shame
 To the paths of Truth :
 Howbeit, he rose, like one who had been striving
 Fiercely within, or traveller late-arriving
 After mishap ;
 But it quickly calm'd his spirits to review
 In hope that land of mountain-promise through,
 As in a map.

Boots not to say how well the youth responded
To that morning's call,
Launching all-buoyant on the tide that bounded
His sire's old hall ;
Nor lists to tell with what impatient pride,
All-unconcern'd at such, he sped beside
Thy fields, fair France ;
Holding the flattering future in abeyance,
And slumbering in his hopes, or his conveyance,
As in a trance.

Suffice, when on the mountains fell, at length,
His wondering gaze,
He felt the appalling scene in all its strength,
And went his ways ;
Winding his steps through many a witchery,
Where many a fairy
Spread many a charm in that unearthly sky,
Unseen and airy ;
Till, wild Romanche, upon thy bosom fair, (¹)
He threw him listlessly, and linger'd there !

Then 't was, a sight before his ravish'd eye
Majestic rose,
Majestic, yet with a calm majesty,
Great in repose.
Nature he sought in wildness, and had found her,
With all her solitary vastness round her ;
And here she shone,
Attired in many-mingled hues, and sate,
A peerless queen, and kept her mountain-state,
And had her throne.

But her temple spread afar, and stood on high,
 By many a column
Of unhewn granite, and wild imagery,
 Supported, solemn ;
Here she receives her court, where spirits unknown
Do homage, girdled in her icy zone
 By eternal towers ;
Winter is their defender ; yet beneath,
Sweet summer-winds breathe forth their wanton breath
 O'er a waste of flowers :

While, ever and anon, peers forth, as by
 Some inspiration,
Like a new region call'd up in the sky,—
 The prey-bird's habitation,—
A passing scene of grey peaks in the air, (²)
Passing, for soon the clouds envelop there
 That spectral show ;
These are great Nature's temple-tops ;—look ! where
She spreads a mantle o'er her bosom bare,
 Of maiden-snow :

Never hath man's polluting footstep trod
 Those heights sublime,
But Nature there hath communed with her God
 From endless time ;
There Winter reigns in cold security,
Spreading in white and polar purity,
 That ever freezes,
His lap of snows ; whence, at his airy will,
A wafted merey comes, that tempers still
 The summer-breezes.

But take then from this mitigating wind
 Thy action's guidance ;
 And a sweet type in its timely mercy find
 Of God's contrivance,
 Who frowns, yet spares, reserves His ire aloof,
 And comes in love, giving the precious proof
 In this appearance ;
 Frames of His blast a breeze, His storm a shower,
 And from the centre of His vengeful power,
 Breathes a forbearance.

But at the base of each stone-pyramid,
 Dense, or disjointed,
 Or sudden-sever'd in their rolling pride
 By peak sky-pointed,
 Like a huge army's mustering force, the clouds
 Come round in ominous-conspiring crowds,
 While some, asunder,
 Halt upon cliffs apart, till at high call
 In full and dark conclave assembled all,
 They strike their thunder :

Yet the dark tempest's distant lightning-glare
 Gives to the roaming
 Time to retreat, seek shelter, and prepare
 For its sure coming :
 Bestir thee then ! let not its eyeless wrath
 O'ertake thy steps, and turn thee from thy path,
 And triumph o'er thee ;
 Loiterer, the day is yet thine own, the road
 Lighted unto thy feet, the bless'd abode
 Open before thee !

What though with threatening pomp the glacier rear,

From the gap near it,

Its horrid brow, and in such guise appear,

As ye might fear it;

Be steadfast still, for woe unto that man,

Who, rashly urg'd, leads forth the adventurous van

In midnight error!

Betwixt each step up-yawns a precipice,

Where Death dwells in unfathom'd fields of ice,

An unknown terror:

But Nature, from this fastness in the rock,—

To the poor peasant

To make the river fresh, and to his flock

The pasture pleasant,—

Sends forth unnumber'd rills; so doth she turn

Her terror to a joy, and thou might'st learn,

Rover, from this,

That oft the counsellor most grim and stern,

Lacks not the love that labours but to earn

For others the bliss:

Look! from the cliff's cold mouth this mercy comes,

And that thou takest,

Flows for each fly that thirsteth as he roams,

Even as thou lackest:—

So let thy soul, (thus inly spoke the youth,

As, pondering here, he took the impress of truth

From the rock's rude feature,)

So let thy soul, with like impartial part,

Give the best blessing that thou hast at heart,

To thy brother-creature!—

Step forth!—thy vision, like some dreamer's, strays
O'er a rich profusion,
Yet palpable, and growing with thy gaze,
And no delusion:

Step forth!—albeit one landscape fair forsake thee,
A fairer, pilgrim, where yon track shall take thee
By path deep-hidden,
Shows where, methinks, the charmed spirits repair,
A haunt on earth for the blest troops of air,
But to man forbidden.

Look!—Now thou stand'st upon a peerless throne,
Thy state profound
Marshall'd with clouds: look!—from this place of stone,
What seems the ground,
Hath a many-colour'd carpet, thick with flowers,
Where the day dances, and the enchanted hours
Yet linger so,
That the sweet nymphs of evening keep the skies,
Till Morn comes blushing on their revelries,
And bids them go;

Yet she steals chastely in, and with her blushes
Renews the gambols;
And from its fount of stone the ice-stream gushes,
And the flock rambles;
And the due peasant wakes his pastoral reed,
Come with the mountain-maiden up to lead
The dance of day;
While the cold mists that brought the evening-sadness,
Like human cares before the face of gladness,
Melt away.

Now wheels the honey-bee, from blossom winging
Onward to blossom.

His busy hum, gathering his sweets, and singing
In Eden's bosom;

And piping birds, and oft from cleft abhorrent
The mountain-breeze, with the down-struggling torrent
Borne on, and blending;
And goat back-clambering, at the herd-boy's call,
From scarce-reach'd slope, and wondrous waterfall, (³)
From Heaven descending,

With ceaseless spray watering the vale, and urging
The wild rock-river,—

Such, with the thousand ecstacies emerging
From the scene for ever,

Might well entrance the spirit of that rover,
Who, spite of adventitious ill, a lover
Of the true and great,
Roam'd lonely at a sire's revered behest,
To learn from Nature's proudest what were best
For his petty state;

And he learn'd, and strangely learn'd;—but at this tide
Must not be told

What mountain-spells and mysteries abide,
Yet to unfold.

Nature's great frame made him appear the less,
Yet had she lent his soul a loftiness,
And sterner stature;
But view'd, apart from her sublimities,
She stood before him in a kindlier guise,
And fairer feature;

'T was then she wore a more familiar mien,
Blooming beside him ;
And seem'd to wish, albeit a mighty queen,
Bliss might betide him ;
For nature smiles upon the lowliest
As on the proud, and makes her beautey blest ;
Ah ! happy there,—
Where queenly state puts on a pomp like this,
Whose fairest hope is for a people's bliss,
And chiefest care.

And there's a love that in the earth's high places
Takes root,
And keeps in pride's cold atmosphere its graces,
And bears its fruit ;
And chill'd, albeit, by icy state, and scanted,
Lives yet, a solitary thing, implanted
Amid the gloom ;
Even as the wild flower, in the waste abiding,
Clings to the loftiest cliff with a confiding
And steadfast bloom :

Pilgrim ! behold yon rocks that pathless prove,
Save to thine eye ;
Look up !—a thousand symbols of such love
Can'st thou descry ;
There, blossoms wreath the cliff's cold brow, and dress
Death in his sternest form with loveliness ;
And breezes blow ;
And rills gush from their confines stony-hearted,
Showing, that love, where baffled most and thwarted,
Should still do so,—

And range in richness forth : such, might the world,
Duly accounting,
Be as yon vale is with the blessing hurl'd
From that true fountain ;
Taking the precept to be gather'd thence,—
That the good given is given but to dispense ;
Even as the river
Thrown on that vale doth linger till he leave her
Richly endow'd, and grown from a receiver
Herself a giver.

But the stream that sweetly feeds that flowery wild,
Tells, as it wanders,
To him who, by its prompting voice beguil'd,
A moment ponders,—
That the season when the fullest tide is flowing,
Is still the time when fortune comes bestowing
Her fairest gift ;
And as yon little lake stores up its treasure,
So store thou, and dispense the allotted measure
With care and thrift ;

Else when in day of dry adversity
Thou needs must droop,
How bitter then shall be the change to thee,
Untaught to stoop.—
Here is great Nature's book, herself the teacher ;
Learn !—or she will be found thy sure impeacher,
It needs must be ;
Look ! in its every page there is example ;
The volume is thine own, its range is ample,
Its knowledge free.

Hark!—the bee tells how Industry doth hourly
Gather her hoard,
Lest winter come, and the storm bluster sourly,
Before 't is stored ;
But the bird's louder lay tells thee, between
Thy toil, to bring some mirth upon the scene,
Where all were beauty,
If, warn'd by nature's and by reason's voice,
Each would act well his part, and all rejoice,
And love their duty.—

Thuswise impress'd, with philosophic smile,
And sentiment,
The youth approv'd and fructified his toil,
Still as he went ;
When lo!—round-roll'd in dark and threatening mood—
Making him in that mountain-solitude
Yet more alone,—
Clouds came upon his path ; he turn'd, and strove
With that wild course where he who roves must rove
A way unknown :

And here full long and fatally, perchance,
'T were his to roam,
Save that there sudden peer'd upon the expanse,
A peasant's home :
Day had declined, and mountain-regions throw
Their shadows early,
And 't is sweet to see—as those dark shadows grow,—
Attain'd so nearly,
That welcome in the waste, which to discover,
Is well for the bewilder'd mountain-rover.

From cleft fast by, with modest voice complaining,
Did meekly emerge
A little rill, that grew and went on gaining
A prouder surge ;—
Thus, man, the pilgrim deem'd, ere life grow firmer,
Yields to his helpless lot with idle murmur,
And feeble force ;
But when in childhood's humble world no longer,
He takes, as age goes on, and waxes stronger,
A bolder course :—

The impending portal gain'd, with artless truth
The peasant hail'd him,
And drew that courteous greeting from the youth
Which never fail'd him ;
Meantime, the hostess of the hut, in bread
Of rye and milk of mountain-goat forth-spread
Her household hoard,
Simple yet sweet, while dish'd with anxious care,
Some chamois-venison for the stranger's fare
Smoked on the board :

And now full many a daringfeat of worth,
And thrilling tale,
With laughter from the heart, and unforced mirth,
Throughout prevail ;
Till mountain-venture and the chamois-chase,
With short repose,
Wore out the night, and onward brought apace,
Day to disclose,
Freedom enthroned in unrestricted reign,
The ample monarch of a rock-domain :

The peasant now led forth his pilgrim-guest,
And bade him heed,
How Industry from the rock's churlish breast
Can force the seed ;
And rear the flowers of love, earth's fair increase ;
While, wing'd on many a sound, comes dreamy peace
The mountains o'er ;
And in wild range the populous bee, to yield—
A fellow-labourer in contentment's field—
His luscious store :

The youth spoke not, but own'd with pensive look
The precept mild
Taught by that scene where, in her loneliest nook,
Nature's free child
Plies, as he sings, the hour's rude industry ;
Or copes the storm, and wakes the day on high,
A mountain-ranger ;
Then to his home within that rock-recess
Comes smiling, like determin'd happiness,
In spite of danger :

He cannot choose but smile, for smiles are there,
Waiting the meeting ;
And 't is sweet and seemly, where the faith is fair,
Thus to be greeting :
His morn's repast from hasty hand, yet trim,
Tells there is some one will yet think of him
Wandering away ;
That the same hand shall set the pine-log burning,
Prepare the couch, and welcome his returning
At close of day.

Such with observant heed the pilgrim saw,
And learn'd from such,
That in untutor'd nature was a law
Might profit much :
Here the fair troth was kept as it was plighted ;
By watchful Love her wanderer's ills requited,
His hardships shared ;
Love who still tells, through all his headlong journeys,
By a substantial faith, that his return is
Look'd for, and cared :

But that within his wild home's resting-place
Dwells this true warder,
Prompts him to speed his flagging mountain-chase
With a fresh ardour ;
While, tired with quest and borne down with its spoil,
The home-return were but an irksome toil
To that unbliss'd,
Who all day long in solitary flight,
Comes back, like an unmated bird, at night,
To a lone nest.

Sweet is love's early choice, but for the hour
After election,
They best can speak who have most felt the power
Of tried affection :
The hunter takes his treacherous mountain-range
With fearless tread,
Yet meets in his true love welcome exchange
For dangers fled,
Blest state ! where souls, in sweet communion, prove
The true effects of undissembled love.

CANTO IV.

“ O Italy, how beautiful thou art !
Yet I could weep,—for thou art lying, alas !
Low in the dust ; and they who come admire thee
As we admire the beautiful in death.”

ROGERS.

SPORTING with time, thus mused the pilgrim-boy,
 But moments muse not,
And 't were fitting he so use the instructive toy,
 That he misuse not ;
Glean profit from his play, and learn discretion
 From fleeting summer,
And not come back with the unbless'd impression
 Of a short-comer :
Time lent him leisure, and he deem'd it meet
To cull instruction from a source so sweet.

At length from his proud pinnacle receding,
 An humbled learner,
He trod ;—yet ever with fond eye up-heeding
 Its aspect sterner,—
The Alp's enamell'd slope, and rambled on,
Till he found that pathway in advance was none,
 Nor in retreat ;
That path, quoth he, my guidance late, doth picture
The worldly friend who, in some dark conjecture,
 Forsakes the feet.

But boldly forth the adventurous rover sped,
And still persisted,
Hour after hour beguil'd, and onward led,
Even as he listed ;
And still new wonders so entranc'd his gaze,
And fill'd his soul, that, for all future days
Come what there may,
He had no thought o'er fairer fields to launch,
If from the bosom of the sweet Romanche
He e'er could stray :

Yet he left her, but it was as a lover
Who leaves his heart ;
And found, as he soar'd o'er the snows above her,
How hard to part ;
'T was his first mountain-love ; and oh, beware !
Ye, who yet know not how those features are
In the heart imprinted,
That take with the first charm ;—thus inly sigh'd
One in whose breast such charms, perchance, abide,
Too deeply tinted.

But here he loved as others love, and roving
Like other rovers ;
Learn'd that the eye, from an old charm removing,
A new discovers :
Even so ; and time was on the wing, and willing,
And quickly brought him,—
Though Hope, he fear'd, might not be found fulfilling
All she had taught him,—
To skies,—but imagination lacks a name
For sights and sounds that in their compass came.

A waste of rocks that the eye fails in ranging,
For some soar higher,
Posted like sentry-guards, and hark ! exchanging
Their watchwords dire
In what ye hear as thunders ;—but that flash,
Rending, as 't were, yon cliffs with fiery gash,
At each fierce entry
Up-opens a wild world, and shows most like
The giant-glance,—before his terrors strike,
Sent by the sentry :

And snows, urg'd headlong o'er the mountain's flank,
With thundering ear,
And files of ice, in serried rank on rank,
Take up the war ;
And the battle-peal rolls merrily afar ;
But things whereon, to infix a fatal scar,
The sky-bolt falls,
Are such as in the world the weaker are,
Opposing to their fate a feeble bar,
When the time calls.

But words fail all to express a scene, whose lone
And spectral grandeur,
Oft-told, is yet to them but truly known
Who thither wander ;
Writ, 't will offend, like to that painter's piece
Who yields his canvass to the wild caprice
Of fancy's sport ;
Or as some deed of awe, that in the telling
Passes belief by its too far excelling,
Or else falls short.—

So, to return :—this youth's love-spell was binding,
Till his way he did take
Where coils Durance awhile his serpent-winding (¹)
Into a lake ;
Diverging thence, he ascended till he stood
High in a pass of stony solitude, (²)
Where meekly dwell
A few poor scatter'd Christians in their path
To Heaven ; 't was here Neff kept for them the faith,
And fix'd the spell.

And 't were wiser, deem'd the pilgrim, as he gazed
On their existence,
From crops on cliffs, beneath such blessings rais'd,
To pick subsistence ;
With this poor flock their aspect wear of sweetness,
And feel its peace,
Waiting, in Resignation's calm completeness,
The expiring lease,
Than lead, in sumptuous state, a life of riot,
Fruitful of nothing save the heart's disquiet.

Short was the scene, yet hopeful for his soul,
He felt its power,
And would not he should err from the control
Of such an hour ;
But had a thought, (perchance 't was heard in Heaven,)
That he might strive in faith, as these had striven,
And not give way ;—
In pondering thus, a voice amid the shock
Of the flood's conflict with an aged rock, (³)
Thus seem'd to say ;—

“ Behold the torrent through this channel ancient,
 With wrath sublime
 Careering, like mercurial youth impatient
 Of halting time ;
 See ! how it rolls, in ceaseless tumult, on,
 Tears its wild way, and chafes the unyielding stone
 That sternly hems it ;
 Look well!—and learn a steadfast majesty ;
 And, rather than yon idle uproar, be
 The power that stems it.”—

Something beyond, a valley of fair fountains,
 And fairer daughters,—
 Where loud Guil, wandering through a maze of mountains,
 Loses his waters,— (⁴)
 Stole, like a seraph, o'er his raptur'd eye ;
 He paus'd, and paid his homage, and pass'd by,
 And quickly pass'd ;
 For rolling thunder-clouds rose gloomily,
 Where Viso's spectral summit pierc'd the sky,
 And bade him haste : (⁵)

When, still ambitious of new heights, he went
 O'er Winter's regions,
 To adorn whose icy court, Flora had lent
 Her gayest legions,
 Which show'd like youth in the cold lap of age,
 Or as peace comes, bearing o'er prostrate rage
 Her presence sacred ;
 But like yon snows are the world's sympathies,
 And in bosom like that rock unyielding lies
 Relentless hatred.—

Thus shaped he from some passing imagery
 Semblance ideal,
Nor reck'd those gorgeous realms should reach his eye
 In aspect real,
Where Italy like an enchantment lies,—
Till he had pass'd through many a paradise,
 And many a peril ;
And, that which never charm'd his youth the less,
O'er many a wide-spread mountain-wilderness,
 Silent and sterile :

Yet further tarrying not than to elicit
 Precept severe,
Like one who seeks, after some loftier visit,
 His own calm sphere,—
Ingulf'd at length within a wild ravine,
O'er a road rude with crags of threatening mien
 He slowly rang'd ;
Fields bright as hopes stole on the distant scene,
Yet a wide waste of cliffs and snows between
 Kept them estrang'd :

But swift as thought kenn'd he that fairest realm
 Of realms most fair, (6)
Whose charms, albeit in mourning yet, o'erwhelm
 The gazer there,—
And thus exclaim'd ;—“ Oh ! may thy future be
What Nature made thee for, fair Italy,
 A peerless nation !
And as thou risest from yon rocks on high,
So may'st thou yet redeem thy majesty
 From desolation !—

“ Fertile of fame !—oh thou, whose greatness wrought
A world’s control ! (7)
Thy aspect comes upon me like a thought
That sears the soul !
Thou,—the old empire, all of heroes,—thou,
The unexampled !
It was no common stroke that laid thee low,
Thy spirit was trampled ;—
But Nature comes, Nature who yet would save,
And sits, a beauteous mourner, on thy grave !

“ Her flowers bedeck the dead ; from whose great dust,—
Sweet omen fair !—
Springs life, luxuriant still, and speaks a trust,
And breathes a prayer,
That thou shalt yet be free !—Here, at thy portal,
I gaze on thee, as on a thing immortal,
And feel thy sway ;
But thy attire speaks thee a living spirit,
As ’t were to life come back again, to inherit
A brighter day !”

He said ; and turn’d, as Grief turns from the dead,
With tears, yet hopes ;
Seeking a solace where the gorge forth-led
O’er fairy slopes ;
Here the pale-purple Rhododendron waving,
Look’d o’er a torrent that its way went laving,
Like human life ;
A changeful course, where sounds of gentlest meaning
Speak all of peace, till care comes intervening,
And all is strife :

Yet let the rocks rise in what form they listed,
And in what force,
Like to a strenuous will that flood resisted,
And kept its course ;
And 't was a sight, how with the stubborn foe
Those waters struggled, ere they leap'd below
To Lucerne's vale ;
Here the youth smiled, responsive to her cheer,
And while she waked the retrospective tear,
Thus bade her hail :—

“ Thou lovely valley of Lucerne, (⁸)
How precious were the skill to earn
A peace so calm as thine !
How sweeter far to seek thy shades,
And trace thy green and devious glades,
That hold a lot like mine !

“ A lot like mine I will not tell ;
It is my lot, and so 't is well,
It might have been less mild ;
Who holds his lot without alloy ?
And I, alas !—fate's restless toy,
Misfortune's houseless child !

“ And now I'm far remote from all,
That happier wight can gladness call,
My native land and home ;
Fate sends me forth, the toy is toss'd ;
Yet wherefore grieve ? there's nothing lost,
And misery must roam :

“ There’s nothing lost, yet something gain’d ;
I have a home ; the tear’s but feign’d
That falls for fancied ill ;
I have yet a home ; one kindly care
Still wakes to watch me through the snare
That compasseth me still.

“ But I, sweet vale ! must wander on,
The spirit of my spirit gone,
Yet in each sight and sound
Still seen, in true return, and known ;
A Form, though still before me, flown,
Lost, yet for ever found :

“ That Form of love is lost to me ;
Yet there is one will think of me,
A pensive pilgrim here :
The woodland-path I loved so well,
The haunted stream,—I cannot tell,
If they will keep their cheer :

“ But ah ! one eye shall fondly glow,
One faithful bosom shall bestow
A sigh for my return ;
And if within thy green retreat
I rest in death my weary feet,
There’s one will weep, Lucerne !—”

Thus ran the instinctive lay ; yet reassured
By its last strain,—
In guise of one who feels his soul secured
From the outcast's pain,—
He turn'd him to the mountain-world again,
Even from so fair a scene, where he would fain
Have linger'd long ;
But, as the sweetest dream flies swiftest by,
So fled Lucerne, left with a passing sigh,
And plaintive song.

Deep in yon pathless realm lies Nature's field,
Perchance, the fairest,
As in her rudest rock is still conceal'd
Her gem the rarest ;—
The proud thought spurr'd his spirit to the quest ;
And many a cliff, with feature huge impress'd
Like living thing,
Rose with the ever-changeful hour ;—yet all
Look'd like poor subjects, of pretension small,
Before their king :—

And that king is Blanc ; for the snows remain
Ever around him ;
And by right Divine that king doth reign,
For Creation crown'd him :
And his vassals lie chain'd in links of stone,
And may not encroach upon his throne,
There are gulfs between ;
And like kings who would be deem'd the great,
He retires, and keeps in secret state
His awful mien :

And a sea of waves that must not flow,
 But in surge-like swell
Seem to be plunging, yet cannot go
 From their icy spell,—
Guard the grim precincts of his court,
As they had been order'd to resort
 There, and remain ;
Rang'd round, a stern and faithful legion,
To keep that an uninvaded region
 Through his great reign.

Yet from him no peak of majesty (⁹)
 Pierces the air,
To tell the pilgrim's aching eye
 That Blane is there :
He scorns those sons of humbler height
Who in being conspicuous take delight,—
 And with aspect calm
Looks o'er them on Jungfrau's unreach'd snows,
And for loftiness, loneliness, and repose,
 Still bears the palm.—

“ Hail, mighty Blane !—I look up on thy brow
 With tears of awe ;—
Hail, and farewell !—already, how
 All that I saw
Around thy realm is nought before thee ;
And if man fall here to adore thee ;
 It is that thou
Dost teach his humbled soul, I think,
Before thee and thy God to sink,
 As I do now !”—

Awed by this soul-subduing apparition
 That fix'd his gaze,
 His pride of earth wrought to the meek ambition
 Of prayer and praise,—
 Prostrate in thought, he left the solemn scene,
 To seek some glory of a milder mien,
 And lowlier stature.

There, as in more familiar sphere, to explore
 Fields, if unknown, yet in accordance more
 With custom'd nature :

Nor vain the search ; deep dales, and rambling rivers,
 And stately mountains,
 Led to a lake, where a great flood delivers (10)
 His feeding fountains ;
 But she, meek child of an impetuous sire,
 Takes with a trembling joy his transient ire
 To her lone breast ;
 As 't were to say,—“ Peace to thy troublous tide,
 Proud stream !—my skies are calm ; come, and abide
 With me at rest !”

And 't were hard to say which wore an aspect purest,
 That lake, or sky ;
 Yet the calm of the unruffled wave seem'd surest
 To the pilgrim's eye :
 So fair was she, that cliffs in wild confusion
 Stood gazing by,
 With their rough faces on her soft seclusion
 Thrown lovingly ;
 While Blanc came, spell-struck, from his distant throne,
 To woo this beauteous daughter of the Rhone.— (11)

Awed by such forceful rivalry, the youth
Might but aspire
To wake to tones of sympathetic truth
His feeble lyre :
He was heart-pierc'd ;—alas ! and to withhold
Its love-plaint in such scenes, what breast so cold
Might e'er avail ?
And, even as stricken souls will speak their pain,
Thus did he pour, in desultory strain,
His artless tale :—

Adieu, fair Daughter of the Rhone,
Gentlest and sweetest !
Adieu, adieu ! I must be gone ;
Farewell !—the happiest hours have flown,
Ever the fleetest :

Fleeter than fleetest mine, alas !
Born but to die :
Amid thy fairy scenes to pass
I should have joy'd, with one that was
In days gone by ;

But 't was denied me ; and I roam,
A restless thing,
Seeking in desert-wastes a home ;
Yet through far years, for time to come,
Shall feel the sting.

Yet, as I wander o'er thy wave,
A something seems
Of placid love a power to have,
That weans me, where thy waters lave,
From grief's extremes ;

But short, sweet nymph ! my sojourn here,
Perchance, 't is well ;
For, dallying long with thee, I fear,
Thy charms might but awake the tear
I would dispel.

I go to greet thy noble sire ;
I own him such ;
Yet, placed in sphere of life far higher
Than thine, perchance, he doth aspire,
And dash too much :

If so,—albeit he bear the palm,
For prouder waters,—
I 'll say thou breath'st a holier balm,
And that I love far more the calm
Of his sweet daughter's.—

What though the haughty Alp send down
His legions wild,
With guns to make his greatness known ;
Still can'st thou smile upon his frown,
As thou hast smiled :

What though on thy soft bosom break
 His fearful thunder ;
The challenge rude content to take,
Thou show'st thee yet a patient lake,
 Thou peerless wonder !

And thus, what storms soe'er combine
 To cloud the scene,
May thy sweet gentle state be mine,
My life like thine be pure, like thine
 My soul serene !

My fleeting hour is pass'd with thee,
 Lake of the river !
But, oh !—whate'er the future be,
Calm as this course upon thy sea,
 Be mine, for ever.—

CANTO V.

“ But go thou to the pastoral vales
Of the Alpine mountains old,
If thou would’st hear immortal tales
By the wind’s deep whispers told ! ”

HEMANS.

WITH this he wrench’d his spirit from the spell,
That mutely bound him
To those wild banks, where he had lov’d to dwell,
Save that around him,
A voice of call, mystic and undefin’d,—
A secret, it might seem, the mountain-wind
Held in its keeping,—
Urg’d him to follow in its airy wake,
And sweep away the tear that in that lake
He would be weeping :

He heard the summons, and obey’d ; when, lo ! —
As he did wander,
Where a loud flood seem’d, like himself, to go
With wild meander,—
A light, as of some star, or meteor’s play,
Flash’d on him from above, then pass’d away,
Like one who blesses
A moment and retires ; — the day had flown,
And a dark grandeur had it all its own
In these recesses,

Save for that light ; a rock-star lonely-left
 'There, as it seem'd,
To be the usher to a hideous cleft,
 Wherin it gleam'd ;
Such might its beams impart ; but whence, or what
Its nature, how it came that this wild spot
 Show'd such a sign ;
Whether a friendly guide, or the decoy
Of some death-doing habitant,—the boy
 Could not divine.

Now all this while, with hands ever uprear'd
 Oaring the dark,
His weary frame to that lone light he steer'd,
 Like wandering bark ;
His gaze fix'd ever-upward on that beacon,
Like seaman's sent at midnight from some deck on
 Some headland looming,
Whence springs the hope that hails him to the shore
From the wild restless waves that round him roar,
 And would entomb him :

'T was well ; for dangers thick did intercept
 The course he held ;
And the flood rose rapidly, and foam'd, and swept,
 And chafed, and swell'd ;
But ever, as the wanderer was approaching,
That light, where most the torrent came encroaching,
 Faithfully fell ;
As 't were to say,—“ Tread in the way of truth,
I 'll guide thee with my beams, unguarded youth,
 And guide thee well !”

While swept the torrent thus, like soul impassion'd,
Wilful, yet grand,
Sudden, a ledge of steps,—as it were fashion'd
By Nature's hand,—
The down-shot light reveal'd; a ghastly glare
It gave, when thrown upon the bosom bare
Of a dark adit,
That led forth from that ledge; and he who had
This hold, were one of deeds or fortunes bad,
Whoever had it;

So deem'd the youth: even such a fell forlorn
Seem'd it, as ne'er
Mortal might pierce, nor searching eye of morn
Penetrate there:
Ascended now, he watch'd with faltering mien,
As the light stray'd athwart the savage scene,
Like life in death;
For, like a lamp in some deserted tomb,
It oped a dismal cave, whose hollow womb
Yawn'd from beneath;

The scene around, without this pit forlorn,
Forlorn and void,
Show'd like a world with all its creatures born,
Struck, and destroy'd:
But the close precincts of that ragged cave,
That ever grinn'd,
Look'd like the approach to some fell living grave
For men that sinn'd;
And now the moon broke through the pass, and lent
With her cold smile a joyless merriment:

Cheer'd yet to see her presence in the sky
 Faithful and fond,
He enter'd, yet with step all-stealthily,
 This cavern shunn'd ;
With spars of all fantastic shapes and hues
Wreath'd, its dark roof dripp'd evermore with ooze,
 And a green scum ;
Saving for such, it seem'd mere emptiness,
With nought of human hope those steps to bless
 That there might come :

Within a fissure of the jutting cliff
 Thus as he enter'd,
A momentary thought cross'd him, that, if
 He rashly ventured,
Some direness might,—but while the dreary doubt
Stay'd his advance awhile, forth-issuing out
 From inner portal,
An ancient awful man, with measured walk—
Measured, and like the slow and solemn stalk
 Of an immortal,—

Approach'd, and, with a deep unearthly gaze
 Fix'd on the stranger,
Ask'd how it fell that, in these wildering ways
 Of doubt and danger,
One, whose few years show'd him unused to such,
Untried in irksome paths, nor practised much
 In toil and trial,
Should,—“ yet for him who hath his ills endured,
This cell,” exclaim'd the Sage, “ be well assured,
 Gives no denial.”—

“Sir, sacred Sir !”—“ Hold, son,—’t is not for thee,
Young though thou art,
To do me homage thus ; the world is free,
To play thy part ;
In me thou see’st a man remote and lonely,
Living submissive to his lot, yet only
Living in prayer ;
Crept from the crowd of a too turbulent world,
And as a wave swept to the rock, and hurl’d,
And broken there.”—

The youth was awed, as taken in a trance
He knew not whither ;
While thus resumed the sage ;—“ what fell mischance
Hath brought thee hither ?”—
“ Father revered !”—quickly replied the boy,
“ Mischance it cannot be which leads to joy
Great as is mine ;
Yet have I err’d, but to redeem the error
Is hence my hope, and turn remorse and terror
To peace divine.

“ I have a tale to tell ; yet if too bold
In the recital,
I know not what excuse might serve, when told,
For your requital ;
It is a tale of pain, and pain deep-felt
Would fix the hearer ;
It may be long, sorrows are so, and dealt
So by the bearer :”—
“ Peace ! let it be so,—fear not to offend ;
Tell it,” exclaim’d the sage, “ and to the end.”—

“ Father,—I had a love I truly loved,
 My bride
 She might not be, yet how should that be proved?—
 She died !
 Living, she kept me in her soul, but when
 She went, my peace went with her;—oh ! and then
 Sin, unrestrain’d
 By the sweet presence of that spirit past,
 Amid the ruins of my peace down-cast,
 Alone remain’d :—

“ I had ;—yet, ah ! there lurks in sweetest flowers
 A fatal worm,
 That with invisible deadly tooth devours
 The very germ :
 Ye love and nurture them, and try to rear ;
 But ’t is of no avail, a death is there,
 To mar your joy ;
 So tender are they that the very hand,
 Whose care it is the budding sweet to expand,
 Doth but destroy.”—

“ The sweets of the early year drop early ; while,—
 Their fragrance past,—
 Others succeed, but only to beguile,
 And fall as fast ;
 And what is love but such?—the prime, alas !—
 As the spring gives the blossom to the grass,
 A transient race,—
 The prime that brings it, brings it to its foes,
 To fade untimely, ere its beauty blows,
 And leave no trace :”—

With mild assent responding thus, the sage
At once proceeded,
By censure meet for inexperienc'd age,
And days unheeded,
To call the truant from sin's reckless course ;—
“ And I too had a love,” with earnest force
The hermit said ;
“ He died, and left me here a lonely father ;
That he had lived, I would have will'd the rather,—
But Heaven forbade :

“ I bow'd my head ; and am in this, his dwelling,
Yet bless'd to be ;
It hath a pomp I think the most excelling,
And worthiest me.—
I have had sore experience of this earth,
Which yet I venerate,—it gave me birth,
But prompts me now
To look to Heaven, and trace my pathway there
Through meditation, and perpetual prayer,
And holy vow :

“ The which if thou would'st free participate,
There is a cell
Inly from this, for soul of lowly state
Bedizen'd well ;—
Follow me !—and within that peaceful nook,
My fare of fruits, and the cold water-brook,
Where I invite thee,
Shall for thy tale of pain, if thou wilt speak,
(Wherof I have some acquaintance yet to seek,)—
Poorly requite thee.”—

With this the youth, led by his grey attendant
And sentinel,
Stole soft beneath the stony roof impendent
Into that cell :
The light lived on without, its aspect turning
To that pass of wildness,
And a light within, like the old man's spirit, burning
With holy mildness ;
Such, with a rock-hewn bench, and on the floor
A couch of rush, were all the hermit's store,

Save in a little sanctuary that oped
Dimly apart,
Where this forlorn self-outcast pray'd and hoped,
And bared his heart,
Some relics dear, and in the rock a chink,
Where morn look'd in ; such led the youth to think
How poor the lot
Of man might be ;—this did the sage perceive,
Look'd up, and said 't was his best bliss to live,
By man forgot.

“ Where should I go for sweeter than the fare
Of Nature's field ? ”
Urg'd he, “ or perfume purer than the air
You mountains yield ? ”
Why seek a kindlier, in my passing day,
Than this rush-bed,
When He, the All-Holy, had not where to lay
His blessed head ?—
Let but his path be pure, his conscience clear,
Bounded his hopes,—man lacks but little here :

“ What lose I, thus self-exiled from the world ?—
 Its scenes of pain :
 If then within its lawless tumults hurl’d,
 What should I gain ?—
 My gain is here ; shuun’d in this rude abode
 By man, I am all the more alone with God,
 Whose great control
 Frees me from many ills,—a blest release ;
 Ills that do still disturb the holiest peace,
 And hurt the soul.”

“ But whence these ills ?—It is the part, and ever
 Must be the joy
 Of an Almighty Maker to deliver,
 And not destroy :”—
 Thus subtly urg’d the youth, when thus the sage,
 Arm’d in the sacred privilege of age,
 Rebuked the thought :
 “ Dismiss the ambitious doubt !—’T is thine to soar
 Within a bounded range, and seek no more
 Than God hath taught ;

“ His law and word,—a safeguard and a treasure
 To true partakers ;
 But curse to them who have fill’d up their measure,
 As His law-breakers :—
 Oh ! strive not with His greatness, nor assume
 Daring desires
 With Him who turns the city to a tomb,
 Where pride aspires :—
 War, famine, and disease the secret sword,
 Are but the avenging workers of His word :

“ Survey the empire-cities of the past,
 From the first-born
 Even to the greatest of the great down-cast, (¹)
 That vast forlorn,
 Who lies with her life and spirit gone,
 A huge disjointed skeleton
 On a blasted heath ;
 A bone is here, and a bone is there ;
 But who may that giant-frame repair,
 Or give it breath ?

“ Attempt not, with unhallow’d pride,
 That graceless sin,
 To draw Fate’s mystic veil aside,
 And pry within :
 Nature man’s course proclaims to all ;
 Think not to scale the eternal wall
 That prisons thee here ;
 Seek not to feed a vain ambition ;
 Self-knowledge and self-intuition
 Are thy true sphere.”—

“ Early the tree of Knowledge grew, and early—
 By sin beguiled
 To pluck the fruit for which he paid so dearly,—
 Was man defiled :
 Poor helpless man !” exclaim’d the youth, “ afflicted
 With a frail being, and a scope restricted
 To dark surmise ;
 Forbid, save in a bounded sphere, to use it,
 And for his life, condemn’d, alas ! to lose it,
 With all its ties.”

“ But,” said the sage, “ that tree of Light once tasted
Against God’s will,
Who sees the fair fruits of His knowledge wasted
Wantonly still,
Its lessons spurn’d, its richness cast away ;
What yet remains but to redeem the day
Of duty scanted ?
And lo ! for one fair tree of Life forbidden,
There springs another in a fairer Eden
Divinely planted :

“ This then, at least, is thine ; the boon denied thee
Is still awarded ;
Let not this tempting tree grow forth beside thee,
All-unregarded ;
If sin hath set thee with thy God at strife,
Humbly forsake it ;
And for the fruit of the true tree of Life,
Freely partake it ;
Touch not the tree forbid by thy great Giver,
But feast upon this fruit, and live for ever !

“ If it were wild to sin, ’t were wilder far
To incur its curses,
When for unnumber’d sins, be sure, there are
Unnumber’d mercies ;
So thou but ask of Him who can impart,
With penitent spirit, and a prostrate heart
Low in the dust ;
Look to Him as the Healer of thy woes,
And meek and child-like in His power repose
A fearless trust :

“ Do this, and let thy brother-creature learn,
 Even from the doing,
 That He, thou look’st to, hath the power to turn,
 And save from ruin :
 Oft hast thou given an earthly gift, and felt,
 Even as thy bounteous hand the blessing dealt,
 An earthly joy ;
 Oh ! what then were the precious bliss sublime
 To lay thy holy offering there, where time
 Cannot destroy !”—

Thus wore the solemn scene : in converse dear
 Each question’d each,
 With mutual love, the youth content to hear,
 The sage to teach ;
 Till simple fare, season’d with counsels mild,
 And short repose, the weary night beguil’d,
 And morning, blushing
 To leave the gorgeous world so long unseen,
 Waked to new life, deep glade, and valley green,
 And fountain gushing.

One theme, whereon he found the hermit still
 Gravely reserv’d,
 (For drawn into that piteous theme, his will
 Had sudden swerv’d
 As from some fear,) the youth, though oftentimes thwarted,
 Urg’d with him yet ; and now, ere he departed,
 Would fain renew it :—
 “ It is a haunted spot,” the sage replied ;
 “ But I’ll take thee to that fatal mountain-side,
 And thou shalt view it.”—

Sped from the cell, the morn's devotion ended,
 And spare repast,
Before the growing prospect they ascended,
 Until at last
High on a tract of mountain-verdure soft
Arrived, the hermit rais'd his eyes aloft,
 Entranc'd in prayer ;
Then broke forth thus, in spirit reconcil'd,—
“ Great Power ! I humbly thank thee that my child
 Is in thy care !”

Then turning to the youth, said fondly, “ Thou
 Shalt know the story ;
There is the spot, 'neath yon impending brow
 Of mountain hoary ;
There is the fatal spot, the spot of death ;
His body's grave is in the gorge beneath,—
 His spirit yonder !
Yet oft, I think, it waits my Heavenly calling,
Fondly permitted through that place appalling
 To wander :

“ The thought is love's ;—I love to think 't is so :
 He is at rest.
Roving, he watch'd an eagle from below
 Into her nest :
He climb'd ;—alas ! he should have fear'd, and might
Have known what in ambition's airy flight
 He then was doing.—
”T is rash to trifle with a scene unsightly,
And perilous to sport too long and lightly
 On the brink of ruin :

“ Remember this!—If in thy youth’s career
Thou hast retreated,
Timely, from sin, let not the deed of fear
Be once repeated!—
My thoughtless boy had sealed yon crags on high
Oft, and as oft sealed with impunity;
These perils past,
He came to place, as on a sure defence,
In his tried skill a fearless confidence,
And fell at last:

“ Wildly adventured he; (the quicklier told,
The less ’t is felt;)
That boy-prize tempted him; he lost his hold
There, as he knelt;
Fell through yon cleft:—I lived, yet saw him fall!
And with him fell my earthly blessings all;
Yet was there given,
In kind exchange, one thought of priceless worth,—
Perfection tarries not on this cold earth,
It hastes to Heaven:

“ Thou keep’st him in my eye;—at once, adieu!
With this fond prayer,
That such a death may not become thy due,
As was his share!”—
So, with enfeebled step, that lonely man
Crept downward to his cave, as one whose span
Of life was narrow’d;
The youth resum’d his course, as one, with soul,
Spite of that aged counsellor’s control,
Perplex’d and harrow’d.

CANTO VI.

" This is no mortal business, nor no sound
That the earth owes."

SHAKESPEAR.

BUT many a treacherous path the pilgrim traced
Forth from that cell,
Till in the wildest of the mountain-waste
It thus befell ;—
The morn had grown, and to deep gorge descended
The mountain-light ;
And spirits, he deem'd, that on the dark attended,
Long taken flight ;
And universal life seem'd with the sun,
Even in this waste, its waken'd course to run.

There breath'd a peaceful harmony in all,
Save the youth's breast,
Where all alone he on himself did call,
As his sole guest :
A strangeness haunted him, he knew not why,
Like some unwonted dream that will not fly,
When flies the slumber ;
But things in quick succession came to entrance
His thought, the latest not the least, perchance,
Of that wild number :

And in his bosom's depths there lurk'd a gloom,
 Not yet defeated,
 Which must be master'd ere a happier doom
 Might be completed ;
 A gloom of twofold source ;—blighted affection,
 Whereof to extinguish the wild recollection,
 He plung'd in riot ;
 Fatal resourcee, dark thought, disastrous sin,
 That gave to grief's tumultuous tide within
 A new disquiet :

Now whether this, or some strange bodelement left
 From that dread tale
 Told by the hermit of the haunted cleft,
 Might most avail
 Darkly to sway a soul all-apt as his,
 'T were vain to seek ;—yet, as from some abyss
 Remote, falls in successive plunge the breaker
 On some lone shore,
 Seem'd thus to come the voice of a dark speaker
 The mountains o'er :—

“ Home again, home again, reft one,
 That o'er blighted hopes art mourning !
 Home again !—yet there is left one
 Who waits thy returning !
 His prayer is still with thee, he speaks to thy soul,
 Through the voice of a warner thou can'st not control.

“ What avails, what avails thy lamenting ?
 The desert is deaf to thy moan ;
 Complaining ne'er leads to repenting,
 To amend is the way to atone.

If the throes of remembrance unblest
 Bring despair,
Or the sting of remorse, like a thorn in thy breast,
 Rankle there ;
In thy years yet to come be thy refuge at last,
In the future, a balm for the pangs of the past !”—

With this, as dies upon the fitful wind
 The sound of ocean,
That wonder went, filling the pilgrim's mind
 With wild emotion ;
Soul-struck he stood, spoke not, nor look'd around,
(For all within himself that viewless sound
 In cadence died,)
Till, struggling to subdue the spell, and wrest
His spirit from the frenzy that possess'd,
 He thus replied :

“ The voices that speak from these heights sublime
 Have their known fountains ;
And are but the terrors of the time
 In these their mountains ;
I see their fury in the flash,
I hear their tumult in the crash
 Of the thunder-ball ;
But thou hast not an earthly sound ;
Oh ! tell me where thou might'st be found,
 Shaped to my call !”—

“ Within the portals of thy shut breast
 Turn but thine eye !
There shalt thou find an unquiet guest
 Thou can’t not fly !
He is there,—and thou must not disdain him,
To accuse,—and thou must entertain him
 With full confession ;
For he comes to evoke all, and impugn all
Thy sins, before his dread tribunal,
 In secret session !”—

“ And art thou he, whose words of wonder,
 Once gently spoken,
Return to rive my soul asunder
 With louder token ?—
Oh,—for some blessed bribe to fee thee !
For, though with eye I may not see thee,
 I feel thee near ;
And vain all my efforts to control
Something that tells my secret soul,—
 Thou art to fear !”—

“ That blessed bribe is a debt,
Thou hast owed this many a day ;
Then faithfully score it, and let
 A redeeming future pay !
Or still one wild commotion
 Shall sweep thy spirit o’er,
As the surge of the angry ocean
 Sweeps the shore !—

I left thee at peace, in pleasure's bower,
In the sunny days of life ;
But shall set thee now, in my time of power,
With thyself at strife !”—

“ That time,—oh, when ?” the youth bewilder'd said,—
“ Great Power, thou warnest well !—
When shall I come to fall within thy dread
Yet righteous spell ?”—

“ Not when the mist curls up from earth,
And the sun comes down adorning
Dale after dale, and the wild mountain-mirth
Wakes with the morning ;—
But when the torrent's path of spray
Stands out to sight,
And the murmur of life with the dying day
Takes flight ;
When the glacier peers like a field of spar
In the last sun-beam that gilds yet afar
The mountain-height ;
And the cliff with its cape of snow is seen
To wear a wild and ghastly mien
In the failing light ;—
Then come ! then ! with the dark and the dew,
When the Alp assumes an unearthly hue,
As the shadows fall ;
And while light yet lingers on the peak,
’T will be thine to hear, and mine to speak,
And tell thee all !—”

With this the mission of that power was ended,
And the youth, struck to stone,
Or like the lightning-blasted, as he bended—
Left to his thoughts alone,—
On the receding sound his idle glance,—
Came to himself again ;—the trance
Broke suddenly,
And straight invisibly went that wonder,
Like the voice of a distant-dying thunder,
Into the sky.

But the sound, as it died away,
Where that fearful listener was,
Seem'd not at once to ascend, but to stray,
Lingering in the pass ;—
And many-tongued echoes, awaking
From many a cavern 'round,
Took up the wild tone, yet seem'd to be taking,
But to give back the sound.

And mute, and still, and stone-like all this time,
That listener stood,
Like one possess'd, or at some hideous crime
Seen, and subdued ;
Ghastly, like one to the verge of ruin taken,
Yet grand,—for, sudden-struck, he had forsaken
His sin and error ;
And by distant Echo's faltering tongue
Assured that the spell had broken, he flung
Aside his terror :

Yet deem ye not that spell was over
When the time of his travel ended ;
Or, untaught by that token, he fail'd to discover
Where its ceaseless warning tended :
The Spirit was with him, in good and ill,
And its voice, as the voice of conscience, still
With his visions blended ;
But he now shunn'd the ill, and cherish'd the good,
Went to war with himself, and no longer withstood
The Might he had so much offended ;—

So much, as his measure of guilt to fill,
Till its fulness begat in him a skill,
Hence to unlearn
The foul offence, through grace down-given,
And warning stern,
With the which he had vainly-wildly striven,—
And that mystical awful voice of Heaven :—
And he kept his ground, and went on to win
Through the portals of love many souls of sin,—
Those portals that lead to peace within :

And as his noble knowledge grew,
Even so he gave it
To each, for a holy largess, due,
As each would have it.

Before him the course lay clear, and the goal,
For the Truth had shone upon his soul
In peerless beauty ;
And as he had learn'd, even so he taught,
And many a wandering spirit brought
Home to its duty.—

Thus went and came he,—went, and came with change ;

For, ever from that hour,

When first he walk'd within the influence strange

Of that dread Power,

A settled silent mystery,

Like a shadow passing from on high,

Fell on his soul ;

And when that visitation's time was nigh,

He felt what he was little skill'd to fly,

Less, to control :

What was it but the certain presence still

Of one he saw not,

There to point out what he must all fulfil,

And withdraw not ?—

A viewless, yet most potent monitor,

Still to forewarn, but to forewarn him for

A happier future ;

One that pursues the foe unto the end,

But speaks sweet comfort to the steadfast friend,

And faithful suitor.

But a cloud was ever o'er him ; human gladness

Fled at his coming ;

He was not like his kindred now ; the sadness

That sent him roaming,

Had led into this mystery, or madness,

That he came home in ;

He was as one who hath been with the dead,

Or seen some wonder,

Which from his thought—how'er the form be fled,—

He cannot sunder.

The ancient and familiar face of things
Became estrang'd,
For his eye was as a faithless glass that brings
Its aspects chang'd :
Forms which, in youth, his wanton fancy drew,
Frequent and vivid,
Had faded, and wore now a ghastly hue,
Loathsome and livid ;
For he had hence his own particular sphere,—
And that Spirit's voice was ever in his ear.

And thus, the vulgar fame went,—he was mad ;
Nor wonder is it ;—
For in spots, most like the haunt where he had had
That vocal visit,
He might be seen,—as through some doom,—
Nightly to seek congenial gloom,
And there to wander ;
As he the power might come to inherit,
To work the spell of that mighty Spirit,
And dread Commander ;

Yet 't was not so :—he was chang'd ; for now
He felt all the power he could once disavow,
And in Conscience' school had learn'd to bow
To Heaven's high throne ;
And when Darkness rais'd her unearthly crew
Of apparitions to mortal view,
His walk was known,
Where the air-hung arch of some spectral ruin
Showeth what Time hath been mutely doing,—
And he walk'd—alone.

LEARN AND TEACH.

NOTES.—PART II.

CANTO II.

Page 65. (1)—*And answer each other's call:*

“ From cliff to cliff, the rattling crags among,
Leaps the live thunder; not from one lone cloud,
But every mountain now hath found a tongue;
And Jura answers from her misty shroud
Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud.”

BYRON.

CANTO III.

Page 74. (1)—*Till, wild Romanche, upon thy bosom fair,*

The charming river which gives its name to this valley rises in the Col de Lauteret, about a league or so from the city of Briançon; issuing from the stupendous glacier of Tabuchet, near the Villard d'Arène, a wretched hut-village, its course is at first terrific, through, over, and round the rocks which close everywhere upon its waters, and grand is the scene of conflict till it reaches La Grave, from whence to its junction with the rivers Drac and Isère at Grenoble, it is still wild, but peaceably so; the scenery on and around its banks must be seen to be felt.

Page 75. (2)—*A passing scene of gray peaks in the air,*

To all who have visited these regions, the occasional appearance, at a moment when least expected, of these aerial groups of cliff will be a familiar recollection; as the clouds that roll about them break away in huge blocks, those gigantic spectres of stone come upon you, as you look upwards, with sudden sublimity almost appalling.

Page 79. (3)—*From scarce-reach'd slope, and wondrous waterfall*

In the wildest part of the upper valley of the Romanche there is a beautiful cascade, which, issuing from some high point beyond sight, tumbles over and sweeps the cliffs, alternately, for thousands of feet, till it falls finally like a thunder-storm on the vale. Tradition says, that a mountain-maiden, in order to escape the rude addresses of a herdsman who closely pursued her, plunged into its waters from above, and thus fearfully rescued herself; hence its name,—*Le saut de la Pacelle*.

CANTO IV.

Page 89. (1)—*Where coils Durance awhile his serpent-winding*

The Durance has his source somewhere above the city of Briançon, in the Mont Genevre, and, after forming and passing out of a sweet little lake, falls finally into the Rhone; at and above Briançon the course of this river is through a gorge.

Page 89. (2)—*High in a pass of stony solitude,*

Leaving the Durance-valley at the small town of La Roche, two or three leagues below Briançon, you ascend a charming mountain-path that leads to the sequestered village of Palons, at the outlet of the Val Fressiniere; and thence, after the passage of a torrent (the Rimasse) across an awful bridge, you penetrate into the upper Protestant villages of Violins, Minsas, and lastly Dormeilleuse, a place principally of ice, stone, and snow.

Here it was that, centuries ago, a remnant of Protestants retired from the fierce persecutions of Romanism, and here the Light has never since been extinguished: here it was that their great Pastor, Felix Neff, took up his Cross, leaving a name which, as long as the granite mountains around endure, will ever be honoured by a remnant yet remaining. The name of this extraordinary man is indeed sufficiently known and venerated; while his patient heroism, and astonishing spiritual hardihood and enterprise amidst these snowy wastes, ought to reconcile others whose lot lies in a less fearful field.

Dormeilleuse, with its little hamlets above mentioned, contains, or did lately, about forty families, all Protestant, a primitive and simple race, who subsist wholly upon the scanty produce of whatever portion of the soil they can contrive to cultivate, varied by the occasional venison of the chamois, and trout from the torrent; they, as well as their Pastor were clad in sheepskins, dyed and made into garments, and, amidst all their trials and privations, appeared contented and happy. The Pastor himself is, or was some few years since, a most gentlemanlike, interesting, and hospitable man, altogether apostolical in his appearance and demeanour, and evincing in his manner, which was yet cheerful withal, a kind of mysterious and holy melancholy, and that entire resignation of himself and his hopes to spiritual objects, which, when seen to be genuine, cannot be too greatly revered.

A visit to these isolated flocks, with a repast at their Pastor's unique abode, are memories not to be easily set aside.

Page 89. (3)—*Of the flood's conflict with an aged rock,*

Near the bridge across the Rimasse at Palons, a single rock of huge dimensions juts forth from the centre of the torrent, which is here a continuous cascade, broken only by monstrous projecting crags, of which the one in question appears the greatest: the torrent, tumbling upon this, has its waters rent asunder, and, as though indignant at this stern obstruction to its course, rebounds till the split spray sweeps your face as you cross the bridge which seems suspended on its foam.

Page 90. (4)—*Where loud Guil, wandering through a maze of mountains,*

Rising in the Cottian Alps, this torrent takes a course, inconceivably wild and tortuous, to the town and Spa of Guillestre, immediately below which it joins company with the Durance.

Page 90. (5)—*Where Viso's spectral summit pier'd the sky,*

The white towering cone of Monte Viso shows itself here to great advantage, and, when invested in black storm-clouds, looks grand and ghostlike.

Page 91. (6)—*But, swift as thought, kenn'd he that fairest realm*

A very unenviable temper of mind must be his who can look down, unmoved, on the deep and distant fields of Italy, as they first meet his eye on the Piedmontese Alps: from the Col de la Croix the prospect over the plains of the Po, when the atmosphere will permit, is most ample and stupendous; the clouds, as they appear from these elevated regions, rolling majestically one way, while the distant lands seem to be careering the other, conceal alternately and display an apparently limitless tract of verdure which seems a profusion of beauty and fertility.

Page 92. (7)—*Fertile of fame! oh thou, whose greatness wrought*

The sentiments of a late lamented poet, almost prophetic of the hopes of this long-degraded land, will be remembered with enthusiasm at the present crisis in her fortunes.

“The hour shall come,
 When they who think to bind the ethereal spirit,
 Who, like the eagle cowering o'er his prey,
 Watch with quick eye, and strike and strike again,
 If but a sinew vibrate, shall confess
 Their wisdom folly. Even now the flame
 Bursts forth where once it burnt so gloriously,
 And, dying, left a splendour like the day,
 That, like the day, diffused itself, and still
 Blesses the earth— * * * * The dead,
 * * * * * They of that sacred shore, have heard the call,

And through the ranks, from wing to wing, are seen,
Moving as once they were, instead of rage,
Breathing deliberate valour."

ROGERS.

Page 93. (8)—*Thou lovely valley of Lueerne,*

In descending the Col de la Croix you traverse a sweet valley down which struggles the Pelice, sometimes a peaceful and poetic stream, and then suddenly a tumult of waters. The Val Luceerne is that of the Pelice, amplified as it spreads into the plains below, and is surprisingly rich and gorgeous.

Page 96. (9)—*Yet from him no peak of majesty*

Many travellers must have been struck at the absence in Mont Blanc of those towering peaks which frequently distinguish ranges of less elevation; but the solid and ample grandeur of this "monarch of mountains" will engross sufficiently the admiration of all, and secure at once the palm of greatness.

The Jungfrau (Maiden) is one of the northern chain of Alps, flanked on all sides by frightful precipices, and closed up and covered with enormous masses of ice and snow, inaccessible.

Page 97. (10)—*Led to a lake, where a great flood delivers*

The lake of Geneva is, as is well known, supplied from the Rhone, who rolls tumultuously into its bosom, but quickly loses his impetuosity in expansion, and the waters become as clear as the sky. The rocks which close over the course of the Rhone, above this charming lake, give to the scenery a wild and imposing character; these rocks are the bases of lofty mountains, which are parted by the torrent, that rushes through the gorge, foul and foaming, into the lake. The valley of the upper Rhone is very grand and deep, the deepest, perhaps, in the world; many of the peaks at its side rise from 10,000 to 14,000 feet above the sea-level. The Rhone issues in the Pennine Alps, from beautiful glaciers, about 6000 feet above the sea, clustered on the western side of the huge mountain-mass of St. Gothard.

Page 97. (11)—*While Blane came, spell-struck, from his distant throne,*

At one particular hour of the day, and state of the atmosphere, Mont Blanc from a distance of (I think) sixty miles, casts his shadow on this lake, whose inviting beauty might, perhaps, be thought poetically to exercise a charm upon him.

CANTO V

Page 110. (1)—*Even to the greatest of the great down-east,*
Rome.

THE END.

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